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TRADITIONAL SYSTEMS OF MALE EDUCATION AMONG PEDI AND COGNATE TRIBES

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PART II

FIGHTING AND LEADERSHIP

Fighting and leadership rest on the philosophy expressed in the words: "*Póó xo bewa ya kxomo; ya motho e a ipeya*" (A bull is selected among cows; a leader among men selects himself). Every boy is given a chance to prove his worth by fighting as often as there are opponents for him. In this way he acquires skill in fighting and is hardened against adversity. The younger boys are bullied into fighting one another. Every fight is supervised and therefore only the better fighter wins. Boys of neighbouring "*dikxóró*" and neighbouring hamlets and villages are keen rivals. In the same village rivalry is sometimes between Christian and pagan boys. In such rivalries the former have the worse of it because of lack of proper training. Youngsters use *modula* grass for fighting and the older boys use *moretlwa* and other pliable withies. Every group has its own leader (*nkxwete*) who is usually the strongest. He and his immediate associates have many privileges. There is one general leader for the whole district whose leadership is decided in a public fight duly sanctioned by the chief. In the days of Sekhukhuni, the great, there was also a general leader for the country as a whole. The paramount chief was wont to call all the boys from different districts and slaughter a cow for their entertainment. Then he would make the district leaders

fight under his vigilant eye, and the winner and his group got some more meat. This was the fiercest fight of the day and if the boys were equally matched the fight dragged on for a long time, with intervals in between. Once a general leader had been selected each boy in the group was very strictly controlled by him. The leader was then made answerable for the misdeeds of those under him. This included the regulation of social intercourse between boys and girls. Thus, from the point of view of the tribe, they were now a functional unit and could be summoned for expeditions (*masoló*) and free labour (*mothubó*) by the chief. The chief formally gave them the traditional drums thus officially allowing them to organize mixed dances. The first of this series of dances took place in his own kraal.

Let us now briefly examine the traditional method of organizing these fights, the method of grouping the fighters, the order of fighting, the rules governing the fights themselves, and the powers, duties and privileges of a leader.

By common agreement the boys approach the chief and ask for permission "to go and fetch *thšidi* fruit", i.e. to go out and fight for leadership. The chief gives them permission by presenting them with a basket (*utlatla*) with a perforated

bottom. Then they set out early next morning "to fetch *thšidi* fruit". Every able-bodied boy has to attend, but it is compulsory especially for those boys who are prospective candidates for the next initiation school. This latter point is important because the leader of the group has duties to perform during initiation. Therefore he must be known by everyone and the boys must be acquainted with his policy. His main function in the initiation lodge will be to enforce discipline among the boys.

Arriving at their destination they scatter about to pluck *thšidi* fruit and cut switches. The fruits are collected into the basket and some of them are deliberately crushed. The switches are dumped together into one heap and mixed thoroughly so that an individual cannot recognize and choose those that he himself has picked. All the switches must be cut on the spot and none brought from home. This is a precaution taken against sorcery. A spot is selected where fighting takes place. It must of necessity be near a water-well or a stream otherwise water must be fetched in buckets. This water is used for drinking purposes and for treating those who swoon. The boys are then divided arbitrarily into three main groups. Group *A* consists of a few boys who are entrants for the championship fight. It is from them that a leader will select himself. Group *B* consists of big boys who nevertheless feel themselves incompetent to enter for the championship fight. Their main aim in entering in the fight is to fight for the leadership of their group, or win an honourable position within the group. Members of group *C* are small boys who also fight for the leadership of their group, or to win an honourable position within the group. So that at the end of the fight there will be three leaders, one for each group. The leader of group *A* automatically becomes the general leader with over-riding powers. He controls the other groups through their respective leaders. The last boy in each group is forced to run errands and to perform all the menial duties and tasks given to members of his group. He therefore stands in striking contrast to the leader. The last boy in group *A*, or the boy who was last to lose in a fight against

the champion and leader of the boys, has to carry the *thšidi* basket home.

It must be observed that there is no ruling based on age differences or seniority of birth regarding membership of a group. Each boy is free to join the group in which he feels competent to fight. Therefore the first champion and general leader is not necessarily the oldest boy, or the highest in rank, but the strongest or the most skilful fighter amongst them. This is in itself a good disciplinary principle.

The order of fighting differs from tribe to tribe. Fighting is either in ascending order or in descending order. The latter has one outstanding advantage, namely that the very first fight decides the general leader. Once he has been selected, he immediately becomes umpire and judge of the rest of the fights.

Now briefly the rules of the fight are: hold your switch in the right hand and your shield in the left—the order is reversed in the case of left-handed boys. Only the switch must be used for lashing the opponent. Hold it by its thicker end and not vice versa. If one uses any other instrument, one will be punished very severely. Other members of the group pack on him, or the leader deals with him accordingly. Only the shield must be used for purposes of defending oneself. When one is tired, or thirsty, or wishes to select a new switch, one need only to give a sign and the fight will be stopped for a time. The vanquished must own up publicly by saying: "*Ke fentšwe*" (I am defeated) and drop the switch and the shield. Then he must bend down so that the victor may lash him on the back "so as to take the 'cheek' out of him" (*xo mo nthša moreba*).

When all is ready a member of group *A* selects a switch and when he is fully armed, he challenges members of the group by saying: "*Yo a ikwang a ka ntsēna*" (He that feels strong let him fight me). If no one comes forward he looks round and calls upon the boy he would like to fight, or rather the one who he suspects may in future dispute his leadership. If the latter is not prepared to fight him, he must advance unarmed and consent to be lashed on the back "so as to acknowledge

defeat". He then declares himself leader (*nkxwete*) of the group and supervises the rest of the fights. The first two boys after him are called "*melatêla*", i.e. runners-up. They, together with him, constitute the court of justice. The first two are also leader and deputy leader (*nkxwete le nkxwetiana*). There is keen competition between the fighters generally especially between those who are interested in the same girl.

When all the fights are over the leader takes the lead, followed by the deputy leader and his right hand man, and the group marches home singing and dancing the tribal war song (*moxobô*). The carrier of the *thšidi* basket also marches in front so that everybody may see him. Water is poured on the fruits so that the juice from the broken ones may flow into his bleeding wounds. Such a torment emphasizes courage and endurance. People in the village anxiously await their arrival. Girls become very excited as the boys approach the village. Honoric phrases are showered on the leader while scathing remarks are made about the *thšidi* basket carrier. The girls further decorate the leader with beautiful beads. In the capital (*mošatê*) they are formally received by the chief who congratulates the leader, deputy leader and their right hand man. He further outlines some of the most important duties that they have to perform and appeals to members of the group as a whole to obey and respect the leader.

Powers, duties and privileges of a leader

In the first place the leader of the group is made answerable for the misdeeds of individual members in the group. Further, he is convener and chairman in all their meetings. He is also so far as the group is concerned, the legislative, judicial and administrative officer. He discharges his duties with the aid of a small council of members who select themselves during the traditional fights. Some leaders assume dictatorial powers and rule without the aid of the council. But such a one soon earns the jealousy and hatred of his colleagues who may eventually overthrow his rule. The leader directs and controls their movements.

Any member of the group who wishes to leave the boundaries of the district must first obtain his permission. He summons and leads all expeditions (*masolô*), supervises all work parties (*mothubô*), and is conductor in their tribal dances including mixed dances. He also leads them when they perform sacred duties,¹ such as "*xo upa*" and "*mohlapô*". He alone can negotiate with boys from neighbouring districts and arrange for rival fights or competitions in dancing. He shares his privileges with members of the council, but these privileges may also be extended to members of group *A* as a whole. The younger boys run errands for them and if in so doing come across a bee-hive or a tree with ripe fruit, they may not touch it until the big fellows (*merolo e mexolo*) arrive. No one may touch the honey or the fruit until the leader has done so. And if he happens to be absent, one honeycomb or one branch must be preserved for him.

Modern changes in the fights

Pedi boys are no longer eager to engage in these contests as evidenced by the fact that they have actually been discontinued in certain districts, e.g. Pokwani. Some of those who engage in them fight shy of the leadership. A boy fights well, and just when it becomes clear that his opponent is about to give up, he himself gives up. Some boys go there expressly to fight for a second place rather than the first "which would win them leadership and at the same time the envy and jealousy of their friends". Another contributory factor is that Pedi chiefs have become selfish and individualistic so that they are reluctant to share their powers of ruling with another person. Hence they prefer dealing directly with the boys than doing so through their leader. The latter is thus reduced to the position of a prefect with limited powers of supervision. The position of a leader is therefore no longer one of trust, power and privilege. Small wonder then that most boys fight shy of the title. Cutting across all these reasons is the increasing fear of witchcraft. The following account is illuminating:

"In 1921 we went out for a fight. Thsweu ya

¹ See FRANZ, G. H., "Some Customs of the Transvaal Basotho", *Bantu Studies*, 1931, p. 242.

Maxolo (lit. the white one of Maxolo) challenged us. As he was by far not the biggest, everybody seemed to have been taken by surprise. His main opponent was a boy from Moxajana's section (*kxóró ya Moxajana*). The latter was very popular among the masses, and particularly among the girls at home. It was also known that he was liked by the chief. Despite all our good wishes for Moxajana's boy, Thswu ya Maxolo won the fight. When we arrived at home and the people saw Thswu ya Maxolo and not their favourite boy from Moxajana leading the group, there was much dissatisfaction. 'How can a leader come from the Maxolo *kxóró*?' they exclaimed. Not so very long afterwards the boy from Moxajana's *kxóró* challenged the leader and easily won the return fight. People at home rejoiced. Thswu ya Maxolo thereafter never regained his strength and he died still in the prime of life. What else can we conclude from this than that he had been bewitched by the fellow from Moxajana's *kxóró*." This account was given to me by K. of Pokwani.

M., supporting K., gave the following account of a fight between boys of the Maxasa age-group at Pokwani in 1927:

"During the Maxasa fight L., a very likeable

fellow from the Maebaneng *kxóró*, was challenged by one Ramphisa, a fellow whom we had nicknamed *Tšétwa*, i.e. the strong one. Right from the beginning it was clear that *Tšétwa* was a better fighter. But he gave up the fight just when every one was expecting L. to surrender. When later asked why he had decided to fight shy of the title of Nkxwete, he explained that since L. was of royal blood, he did not like to offend against the ruling class and by doing so risk his own life: '*Ba tla ntóya*' (they will bewitch me). In this way L. became our Nkxwete although he was really not entitled to it."

With the increasing fear of magic it is believed that if a boy treats his arm with "dangerous medicine" the medicine will be passed on to any switch he uses to the detriment of his opponent. Therefore the precaution of cutting switches on the spot is no longer a safe form of protection. All the above factors account for the deterioration or even discontinuation of the traditional fights. Their decline undermines discipline among the boys generally and renders their organization for the performance of tribal duties haphazard. So far the tribal organization has not yet found a substitute for them and one wonders whether they will ever find one.

TRADITIONAL INITIATION SCHOOL *

Male initiation among the Pedi is a sacred institution which is strictly taboo to women and the uncircumcized (*mašobo*). The men are extremely reticent when asked questions about it, believing that one who reveals the secrets of the school will be punished supernaturally. Under the circumstances information about it is difficult

to obtain and the little that one gets, one cannot vouch for. Published material on this subject is at present limited and writers do not bring out inter-tribal differences.¹ In the pages that follow I shall try to bring out these inter-tribal differences by comparing the rites as practised mainly by the Pedi proper, the Tau, and the Kone. Where no men-

* The Chapter on "Sex Education" has been submitted to the *Journal of Sexology* for publication as a separate article where it is more appropriate than in *African Studies*. (M. D. W. JEFFREYS, Ed.)

¹ See WINTER, J. A., "The phallus cult amongst the Bantu: particularly the Bapedi of eastern Transvaal", *S. Afr. J. Sc.*, 10/1913, pp. 131-6. ROBERTS, N. & WINTER, C. A. T., "The Kgoma or initiation rites of the Bapedi

of Sekhukhuniland", *S. Afr. J. Sc.*, 12/1915, pp. 561-78. HARRIES, C. H. L., *The Laws and Customs of the Bapedi and Cognate Tribes of the Transvaal*. (Hortors, Johannesburg: 1929.) pp. 63-76. EISELEN, W., *Stamskole in Suid Afrika*, 1929; *Initiation rites of the Ba-Masemola*, 1932; *Nuwe Sesoto Tekste van vulkekundige belang*, 1928; *The Bapedi*, 1931; JUNOD, H. A. *The Life of a South African Tribe*. (Macmillan & Co. Ltd., London: 1927) part I, vol. I.

tion of a particular tribe is made, it must be assumed that the information is common to all of them.

Informants on this subject may be divided into three main categories: (a) Masters of the ceremony, that is men who know the details of the school and have been admitted to all its secrets and mysteries, e.g. the chief, or Master of the Lodge (*rabadia*); (b) those who have not only been initiated but have taken part in the initiation of others acting as instructors and shepherds; (c) those who have been through the school but have since not witnessed any other ceremony. The latter includes mostly Christians who were converted after initiation. Their accounts must, I think, be taken with a pinch of salt. Not only are they vague on many points but they invariably try to prove that there is nothing good in these traditional schools. Members of the first category are the most useful and I was fortunate in securing, among others, the services of a man who had held the position of Master of the Lodge on several occasions.

The aim of Pedi initiation is to prepare the youth for life in the community. Initiation is to them like a factory in which raw material is fashioned and worked into finished articles that can be put to use in the community. As already stated, to the Pedi a boy is a useless good-for-nothing sort of individual who can only be made to conform to the social norm by harsh treatment. Until now the boys will have been members of a lawless gang whose actions were largely outside the place of tribal law. It is now the task of the men to effect a change in them through the institution of initiation. Through actual participation, by formulae, song and ritual, the boys are taught about the rights, duties and obligations of manhood so that they eventually emerge from the initiation school as full-fledged men who may now marry and bring up children, and are privileged to participate in tribal councils. "These initiation ceremonies are performed periodically, and always commence when the kaffir corn ripens, i.e. about March or April. The proceedings are divided into two parts: (1) the *Bodika*, which lasts for about three months; and (2) the *Bogoera*."¹

¹ ROBERTS, N. & WINTER, C. A. T., 1915, p. 562.

Bodika

According to Harries, "In former days the paramount chief of the Pedi was looked upon by all the tribes of the Transvaal, as the controlling head of circumcision lodges."² This view is corroborated by my informants who say: "Just as to-day the government requires a chief to report at the office of the Native Commissioner before opening an initiation school, even so did Sekhukhuni, the great. Every chief or headman in the district was required to present to him for inspection and counting, all the boys who were eligible for the school. Similarly after initiation the young men were brought to him for further inspection as to the state of their health and general condition. Deaths were reported to him and the chief concerned had to give a satisfactory report as to the causes otherwise he had to pay heavily for his carelessness or negligence of duty."³ Thus we see that through initiation the paramountcy of the Maroteng chiefs was recognized.

The average period between one initiation school and another is about four years. The next school may be postponed if there is scarcity of food in the district, a civil war, or if the tribe is at war with another. As a rule the seventh year is taboo: "*Ke monwana wa thšupa-balo*" (it is the finger for pointing at sorcerers). The chief decides on the time in consultation with his council. If they delay without cause, men may clamour for the opening of the school by saying: "*Bana ba xodile*" (i.e. the children are big). There is no fixed age for admission and boys of about 6 and 7 may attend at the same time with men of 20 and 30. Others are so young that the people say of them: "They were carried to the lodge." It is taboo for full brothers to attend at the same time.

A few days before the day of the opening of the school the chief-in-council sit and nominate a Master and Deputy Master of the Lodge. They are selected on grounds of trustworthiness and are paid officials. The council also decides to engage the services of an experienced surgeon (*thipane*). According to Roberts and Winter: "The

² HARRIES, C. H. L., 1929, p. 63.

chief and the men of the kraal gather in secret conclave and choose one of their number as *thipane* (cutter).¹ My informants denied this point most emphatically, saying: "In our country the surgeon must of necessity be an outsider who does not know the boys or their parents. This is a matter of life and death and cannot be given to a local man who may be prejudiced against some boys. Besides, our people generally look upon this job as a menial one. It is therefore given to an Ndebele or Thonga man." So long as they are satisfied with the performance of a surgeon, they will engage him regularly. Semi-independent sections (*dikxóro*) within the chiefdom may engage their own *thipane*. Thus at Pokwani the chief employs one for the whole group, but the Mašifana *kxóro* engage their own. The latter build a separate lodge for their boys.

In the past, the *thipane's* fee was a heifer paid by the chief on behalf of his people. Individual candidates were not expected to pay, it being understood that the free labour service (*mothubó*) rendered by the boys before the opening of the school was payment in kind. Nowadays, in addition to *mothubó*, candidates pay 2s. each. Therefore at the same time when the *thipane* is selected, three other men are selected: the first to collect the fees; the second to assist the *thipane*; and the third to collect and preserve the foreskins.

Once the preliminary arrangements have been made, the chief summons a meeting of the deputy chief, village doctor, and the proposed Master of the Lodge. These four men I shall refer to as the council-of-four. They repair into the hindmost courtyard (*ka sexotlong*) where the chief produces a bag containing the foreskins of the last initiated boys. They are examined by the doctor who also treats them against black magic. Then the Master of the Lodge drills a ritual fire,² over which the foreskins are roasted in a broken piece of clay-pot (*lekopéló*). They are then ground into powder and mixed with concoctions from the doctor's pouch (*sebêba*). The council-of-four then proceed to the proposed site of the Lodge to

examine and fortify it against sorcerers. Ill-omens (*dibeëla*) are removed under the direction and supervision of the doctor who further applies the powder round the site: "*Ke thšidi ya madikana*" (i.e. it protects the initiates). Any one who steps on it is supposed to be hypnotized so that he cannot think of running away. They also prepare the site on which the circumcision has to be conducted. Here a suitable rock is put which later serves as an operation stool (*sehlaló*). Among the Madihlaba people³ they also select a site for the minor lodge (*mphathwana*) into which the boys are led from the operation theatre.

From among the boys of lowest rank they select the Sacrifice of the Lodge (*molobi*) and the Guardian of the Sacred Fire (called *mošweu* among the Pedi proper; *tawana* among the Tau; and *mmai* among the Kone). Among the Tau a third boy is selected, called the Holder of medicated Sticks (*moswari wa diihupa*).

Opening Ceremony

According to Roberts and Winter: "A month before the opening ceremonies, the young men of the tribe who have already been initiated are sent out by the chief to gather quantities of long, slender rods of *moretwa*. They are to be used for thrashing the boys, and are said to be toughened by this treatment."⁴ This is true among all the people mentioned above. On the opening day the men (*mediti*) engage in sham-fights using some of these toughened switches.

Among the Pedi proper there is no preliminary ceremony. The boys, wearing only their traditional *stertriems* (*makxeswa*), have their heads shaved. "This is the first act of severing connections with the past", they say. "It marks the beginning of our separation rites." The boys go out and make strings of *mokumó* bark and gather firewood. On their return they assemble at the capital (*mošatê*) where they remain until early in the morning when they proceed to the place where they are circumcised. According to Harries: "invitations will have been sent to all the neigh-

¹ ROBERTS, N. & WINTER, C. A. T., 1915, p. 562.

² For the symbolism of this ritual fire, read EISELEN, W., "The Sacred Fire of the Bapedi of the Transvaal",

S. Afr. J. Sc., Vol. XXVI, pp. 547-52.

³ They live at xa-Moloi; see map of the district.

⁴ ROBERTS, N. & WINTER, C. A. T., 1915, p. 562.

bouring chiefs and their men to attend this ceremony, which is called, *ho hlagisha koma*—to inaugurate the lodge.”¹ With this statement I agree. “That night the men assemble, shave the heads of the initiates and conduct them to a selected spot about three miles from the head kraal, not far from running water” where the operation is performed. With this statement I cannot agree. Among the Pedi it is strictly taboo for anyone to shave his head in the night. To do so is considered an ill-omen, or a crime punished by supernatural means. They would therefore not dare to “shave the heads of the initiates” during the night. Besides among them women and not men shave the heads of the initiates during the day and when they come together at the men’s place in the capital their heads will have already been shaved.

Among the Tau and the Kone (ba-xa-Matlala) there is a preliminary ceremony called *lexala*. We must therefore take the statement made by Winter as applicable to them and not to the Pedi proper.² The following account will show that Winter’s note is too brief to be of any value.

Among the Kone the boys take the milch cows to the best pastures early in the morning (*di ya mexobo*), but among the Tau it is the young men (*mediti*) who take them out. On the veld the Kone boys have their heads shaved, make strings of *mokumó* bark, and gather firewood. They return home between 10 and 11 a.m. driving their cows whose continuous lowing indicates that they are anxious to meet their young ones. They are milked at home and their milk is used for cooking *lexala* porridge. The boys are arranged in order of seniority and brave warriors distribute slices of this ritual porridge among them and the master of ceremonies thrashes them with a medicated switch, beginning with the Sacrifice of the Lodge. The same night they all assemble at the capital from where they later proceed as a “school” to the site of circumcision.

On the other hand the Tau boys remain at home when the young men go out with the milch

cows. As soon as the boys hear the lowing of the cows and see the dust from their hoofs, they repair to the mountains overlooking the village where they remain until summoned by the men. The cows are milked and their milk is used for cooking *lexala* porridge. The meal (*bupi*) for the cooking of *lexala* is ground by special girls, selected ritually on grounds of purity—all of them must not have menstruated previously. It is then mixed with the dirt from their bodies (*ke thšidi ya madikana*). The *kxadie* *kxolo* does the cooking and all the utensils and pots are medicated. The porridge is ladled into special baskets (*dintlata*) and is stored in a sacred hut. A man is appointed to see to its safety, that is, to prevent malevolent people from bewitching it. The boys spend the night at the men’s place in their different *dikxóro* and do not take any food. During the night each one is served with “strengthening medicine” strictly in order of seniority. Next morning, upon the sound of a native bugle (*phalafala*), women carry the *lexala* porridge to the capital (*mošatš*) followed by the boys and the men. The porridge is deposited in the centre of the *kxóro* at the *mošatš*. Here all the boys come together and are arranged in order of seniority, section by section (*kxóro ka kxóro*). Boys of lowest rank are lined up on either side of the main entrance. “They are the gate-keepers” (*ke batswalli ba kxóro*). All the boys kneel down on both knees, and wait for further instruction. Only brave warriors (*ba ba bolaileng dithšwene*) are allowed in the interior. The bravest among them acts as master of ceremonies. Under his charge the porridge is cut into thick slices with improvised knives made of wood and is carefully examined for food-poison. The master of ceremonies takes a medicated *morethwa* switch and lashes the Sacrifice of the Lodge (*molobi*) on his back so as to “test it”. It is believed that if sorcerers have fiddled about with it with the intention of doing harm to some of the boys, *molobi* will run mad with pain. “He will budge”, they say, and it may take time before he is brought

¹ HARRIES, C. H. L., 1929, p. 67. ² WINTER, C. A. T., 1913, p. 132. Apparently Winter and other writers on the subject were not aware of the inter-tribal differences

that exist. The Pedi proper, i.e. the Maroteng people, despise “*lexala*” as “*dilo tša Barwa*”. Therefore their boys do not participate in it at all.

back. In the meanwhile proceedings are suspended and the village-doctor (*ngaka ya motse*) applies counter-magic to the switch. It is tested again on *molobi* and if his reaction is satisfactory, the *lexala* ritual begins. The brave warriors distribute the slices among the boys who receive them with both hands. The master of ceremonies lashes each one twice, beginning with the lowest. As Winter points out: "This ceremony is to teach them to be brave in war. The boys, who, afraid of this severe thrashing, run away leaving their porridge, are called with that most ugly, indecent name, *mapshega*."¹

The ceremony being over the young men of the last initiation school block the entrance (*kxóro*). According to tradition their predecessors must drive them off so that the boys may go out. There is a sham-fight in which the seniors must win. If they have the worse of it, other men assist them against the juniors "because it is a disgrace for a senior to be defeated by a junior." Among the Kone, from here the men and boys proceed to the *mošatê*. Among the Tau, the boys, accompanied by the *mediti*, go to the veld where their heads are shaved; they make strings and gather firewood. At sundown all return to the *mošatê* where they participate in the evening meal, which for them consists of boiled grain (*lewa*) mixed with some soil. This meal is intended to remind the boy that he is being ushered into the stage of manhood (*bonna*), when he will be allowed to marry a wife who will cook nice clean food for him. Then some songs are sung which are intended to make the boys despise boyish and childish things and look forward towards becoming men. I quote here one of these songs:

Boys: "*Mma ke nya xae mono!*"

Men: "*O ka nya thókóló;*"

Chorus: "*Thlotšana-thlotšana; Nawa-nawa*" etc.

(Mother I defaecate here at home

You may defaecate round balls.)

In the chorus mention is made of all grains used in the district. This tune also serves to remind the people at home that now the boys are ready

to face the inevitable. The Master of the Lodge (*Rabadia*) now takes charge.

Between the hours of 3 and 4 a.m. Rabadia gives a signal for them to proceed to the place of circumcision. At the command: "*Hlahla!*" the boys stand up and with the strong cordon of men (*mediti*) around them, they move in a body hardly knowing what is to happen to them. According to Roberts and Winter the place of circumcision "is always situated at the water's edge, in some secluded spot in a ravine".² Again we are told: "The praeputium is cut off. All boys have to sit on a flat stone, all on the same stone called *Setlalo*. All boys, who either themselves or through their mothers, have some blemish on their character or family-name (e.g. immorality, an adulteress as mother, etc.), are not allowed on this stone *Setlalo*, but must be circumcised on another stone called by the infamous name *tlaba*. The first boys operated on are those who are chosen to suffer before their chief (son of their chief); they are called *malekadigale* (the triers). Then comes the highest in rank, then those of lesser rank, down to the lowest and poorest (servants and those taken as children from defeated kraals)."³

From the above statement we may infer that initiation offers a means of punishing non-conformists in tribal life. Thus among the Mampama people any boy whose mother begot him outside the village (e.g. at the cattle-post or on the cultivated lands) is further ostracized and segregated in the Lodge (*ka mphathong*). A small lodge is built for his use and here he is attended to by one of his relatives. Further, class distinction is emphasized in the method of arranging the boys strictly in order of seniority—the Sacrifice of the Lodge—among all these tribes is the first to be circumcised. The operation itself is called "*xo thenola*" and when it is performed the *mediti* say: "It gives you manhood" (*ke xo xo fa bonna*). The foreskins are collected, dried and preserved.

Among the Madihlaba people the initiates are led to a spot on the opposite side where they kneel down one after the other and clap their hands

¹ WINTER, C. A. T., 1913, p. 132.

² ROBERTS, N. & WINTER, C. A. T., 1915, p. 562.

³ ROBERTS, N. & WINTER, C. A. T., 1915, p. 562.

saying: "*Se-ya mošatê*." This is to remind them that once committed to the initiation school one cannot change one's mind as one wishes. Among the Mampana people they are taken down to the river by attendants who make pot-holes in the sand into which the wounds bleed. Then the penis is suspended by a string tied round the waist.¹ This string serves the same purpose as the "*kgolego*" of the Bagananoa of Roberts² about whom we are told: "This ring, called the *kgolego* (the bond) not only acts as a tourniquet, but serves as a support and keeps the bleeding wound away from the scrotum." When the bleeding stops, the boys are led into the lodge (*ka mphathong*) which will have been constructed in the meanwhile. The pot-holes are then covered with sand and the area is tabooed—one who is found loitering around it is accused of sorcery. On the other hand Roberts and Winter tell us that "the operation over, the initiate is ordered to 'hold the head' and enter the pool of water. Here he remains submerged to the neck, while the rest of the boys are brought one by one, and the same proceedings repeated till all have been circumcised."³ This statement is corroborated by Harries,⁴ but is denied by my informants who argue that after the operation some of the boys are so weak that they faint. "How can such a one be made to remain in water *submerged to the neck*?" Again, while Roberts and Winter acknowledge the fact that the operation is painful, Harries further observes: "Not infrequently, does an initiate faint from exhaustion through loss of blood, and this is taken as an indication that he has not been a strictly moral young man. Some actually bleed to death, but this rarely happens." I am inclined to believe that the custom of making the initiates

to remain under water "*submerged to the neck*" does not exist.

Owing to fear of witchcraft and sorcery it is taboo for any man to step on the spot upon which an initiate has been bleeding. Breach of this taboo is severely punished—the fine is one cow.

When the circumcision ritual is over, men are detailed to build the lodge while others attend to the initiates. Later in the day most of them move homewards in a body singing and dancing the *moxobô*. They must be jovial so as to give women and the uncircumcised the impression that all is well in the school. The surgeon may join them but by arrangement he remains in the neighbourhood so that he can attend to those who come late.

The Lodge (Mphathô)

The size of the lodge varies according to the number of boys who have to be accommodated. It consists of an impenetrable fence made of branches of trees quite impervious to sight and is adequately described by Roberts and Winter.⁵ I must, however, point out that the ground plan differs from tribe to tribe. Among the Tau it is built a day before the opening so as to be ready to receive the initiates from the hands of the surgeon. Branches and thin long sticks are carefully interwoven and form the framework of a fence which will in future be reinforced so that none may see through it. Among the Madihlaba people it is built immediately after the circumcision of the boys. Two lodges are built—a minor lodge and a main one. The initiates are led to the first and remain there all day long. They occupy the main lodge in the afternoon. The general plans of the Kone and Tau lodges are given below.

¹ Cf. the "*kgare ea morelloa*" of the Pedi mentioned in ROBERTS & WINTER, p. 563.

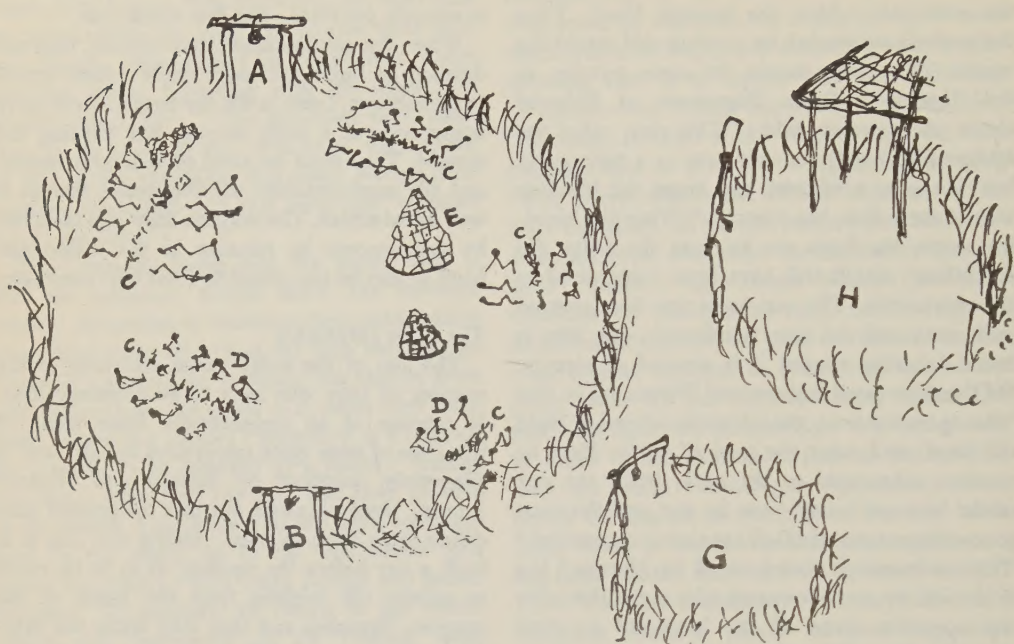
² "The Bagananoa or Ma-Laboch", *S. Afr. J. Sc.*,

12/1915, p. 246. ³ ROBERTS, N. & WINTER, C.A.T., p. 563.

⁴ HARRIES, C. H. L., 1929, p. 67.

⁵ ROBERTS, N. & WINTER, C. A. T., op. cit., p. 564.

Fig. 1.—INITIATION LODGE OF THE KONE, BA-XA-MATLALA



Key:

A = Men's entrance (*kxóro ya banna*).

B = Initiates' entrance (*kxóro ya madikana*).

C = The fire-place, or fire (*kxalatsó*).

D = Initiates round the fire: lying on their backs, knees upwards.

E = The Hyena Monument: conical in shape and made of slabs of rock (*phiri*).

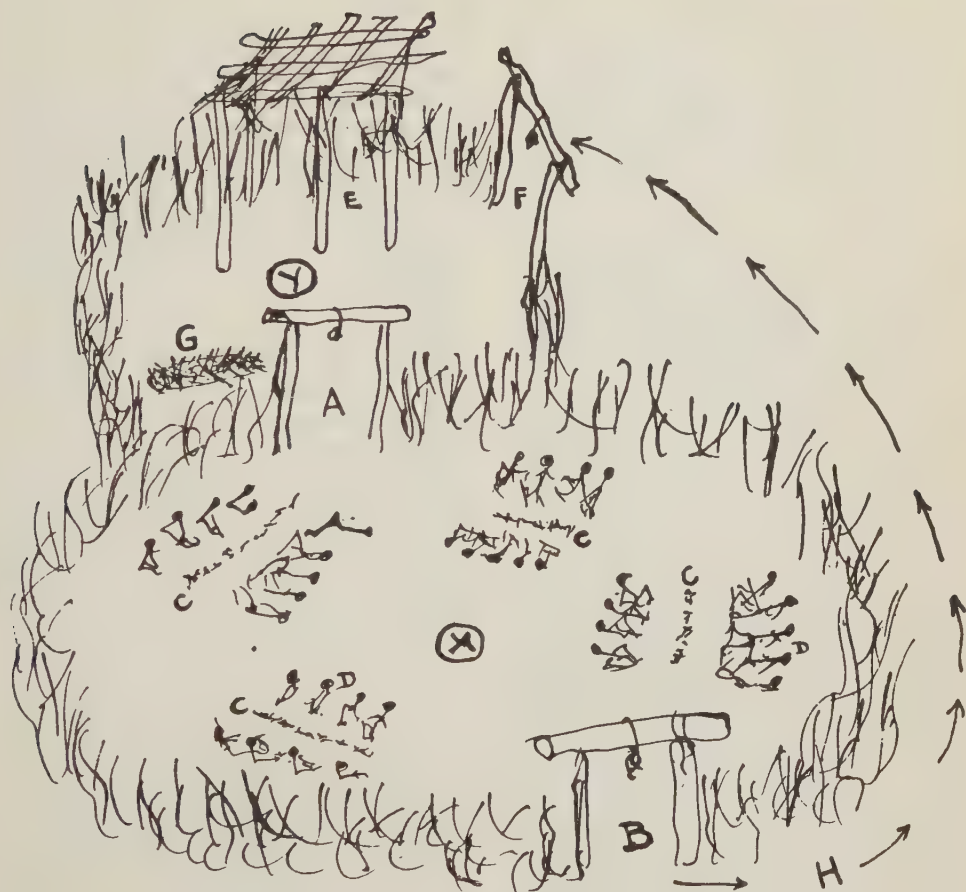
F = The Hyena-cub Monument: also built of slabs of rock (*phišana*).

G = A special shed built for the Master of the Lodge (*Rabadia*). In it sleeps the son of the reigning chief and natural leader of the age-group. The Master cooks for him and looks after his health. He does not eat the food from home "because of the fear of witchcraft and sorcery".

H = Men's lodge and storage place (called *hlaxare*). The *koma* models are kept in this shed.

The *A* entrance always faces homeward, and the *B* entrance away from home, "because the initiates are not supposed to think of home at all". It must be observed that boys from one section (*kxóro*) sit round the same fire. The triers (*malekadigale*) mentioned above, have their fire-places on either side of entrance *B*, "Because they are supposed to be the chief's guard".

Fig. 2.—INITIATION LODGE OF THE TAU



Key:

- A = Men's entrance.
 B = Initiates' entrance.
 C = Initiates' fire-place, or fire, called *tawana*.
 D = Initiates round the fire.
 E = Storage shelters and men's sleeping place.
 It must be observed that Y serves the same purpose with the *hlaxare* of the Kone, and that in addition it accommodates the son of the reigning chief by night, for the same reasons.

- F = Men's exterior entrance; it must always face homewards and is strictly taboo to all initiates, with the exception of the son of the reigning chief and natural leader of the age-group.
 G = Men's fire-place.
 H = The path followed by the son of the reigning chief when he goes from X to Y.
 X = The initiates' lodge.
 Y = The men's lodge.

I understand that it is the practice among the Tau to detain a runaway in the men's lodge pending word from his parents or guardian. This is said to be a precaution to prevent him seeing the initiates in their lodge.¹

Priority number one in the lodge is the drilling of the ritual fire by the Master or any other experienced man. "This flame by which the fire is kindled must be produced by the *leshana*, or 'fire drill', and once it has been lit, it is not allowed to die out again until the close of the ceremonies about three months later."² Thus we see that this fire is the life-blood of the school and, as Eiselen observes, "fire is everywhere looked upon as a purifying agent, which removes the contamination caused by disease and death."³ In this case one may say that it removes the contamination of childhood, though the Pedi themselves merely say: "It is our custom and breach of it may earn us the wrath and indignation of our ancestors." We are told that "one of the novices is appointed Keeper of the Fire, and this is a very strenuous office, since this boy is by no means excused from the daily hunting trips. He has to carry the fire with him wherever he goes and has to return to the initiation camp at night ready to kindle the camp fire, which is often called by the totem-name of the tribe and plays perhaps the most important part in tribal initiation."⁴ The following examples show that the fire is not always called after the totem of the tribe. Among the Tau and the Pedi proper it is called *tawana* (lion's cub)—and a lion is the totem of the Tau. In fact they derive their name from their totem *Tau*. On the other hand the Kone, who revere the Hyena (*phiri*), call it *kxalatsô*. Among the Tau the Keeper of the Sacred Fire is called *tawana*; he is *mošweu* among the Pedi proper, and *mmai* among the Kone. Like the Keeper of the Sacred Flame among the Bagananoa, "This is an important post and the boy to whom it is assigned has to carry a burning log with him all day when the party leaves the enclosure."⁴ It is looked upon as a bad omen if he lets the

fire to go out, for if he did the ancestors would be offended and visit them with calamities. To make sure, the fire in the lodge itself is never allowed to go out. Among the Tau, when ever the initiates go out, the Guardian of the Fire is always preceded by the Holder of medicated Sticks "who wards off evil spirits". As they do not use any blankets by night nor any form of clothing by day, it is the fire that keeps them warm. However I understand that in some lodges blankets and clothes are used with the permission of the chief, but such an action is unpopular with the conservatives who believe that the suffering of cold is itself a hard test of "manhood". Mention might also be made of the short kilts, called "*metšabêlô*", which the initiates use by day for protecting the wounds. Among the Tau these kilts are not allowed into the lodge. Every initiate folds his kilt round a stick and deposits it neatly at the entrance.

Now that the session has been formally opened we may do well to study their general time-table before proceeding to discuss their activities. Since they have no watches to keep time, the hours cited below are mere approximations. I quote a specimen time-table:

Time	Activities
2- 3 a.m.	Singing and bathing.
3- 4 a.m.	Breakfast.
4- 6 a.m.	Singing and repeating formulae.
6- 7 a.m.	<i>Tsêlêtsê</i> march out.
7- 9 a.m.	Wood-carving.
9-12 a.m.	Hunting.
12-1 p.m.	Collect firewood.
1- 2 p.m.	<i>Tsêlêtsê</i> march in.
2- 3 p.m.	Singing and repeating formulae.
3- 4 p.m.	Evening meal.
4- 6 p.m.	Singing and repeating formulae.
6- 9 p.m.	Relaxing by the fire-side.
9- 2 a.m.	Sleep.

¹ Compare Fig. 1 and 2 above with the sketches appearing in HARRIES, *op. cit.*, p. 69; and ROBERTS, N., "The Bagananoa of Ma-Laboch", *S. Afr. J. Sc.*, 12/1915, pp. 241-56, fig. 6.

² ROBERTS, N. & WINTER, C. A. T., 1915, p. 564.

³ "The Sacred Fire of the Bapedi of the Transvaal", *S. Afr. J. Sc.*, 1929, vol. XXVI, p. 548.

⁴ ROBERTS, N., *op. cit.*, p. 247.

Food

Their main diet consists of hard porridge cooked communally by women at home and in every section (*kxóró*). It is ladled out into wooden bowls (*mexopo*) scrubbed scrupulously clean and painted white with lime (*motaxa*). Among the Pedi proper it is true that "when it is cooked, porridge is heaped on each dish, and carried by the girls to a spot some distance from the lodge. On their arrival they shout : *rea robega* (we are heavy), and *mediti* come out to meet them and relieve them of their burdens."¹ On the other hand among the Kone they are taboo to women and uncircumcised persons once ready for dispatch. It is the men (*mediti*) who carry the food away singing :

(Leader) *Heowo!* (Chorus) *Heowo...a...heleowo wo...wo!*

as they go out in order to warn them (women and the uncircumcised) out of their way. Children and old women (*bakxekolo*) are not affected by this taboo. The number of dishes from each *kxóró* depends on the number of boys they have sent in, and on the average it is one for every group of ten boys. Among all these tribes all the dishes are carefully examined for black magic (*selešó*) when they reach their destination. Flat slabs of wood are used for cutting it into slices. Further the dishes from the different *dikxóró* are inter-changed "in order to play the fool on sorcerers who put *selešó* into the food". It is believed that *selešó* can be instructed. "When a sorceress administers it into the porridge," they say, "she charges it with the following message : 'Bring me the son of so-and-so.' Should the wrong person eat it, it will do him no harm because it was not meant for him, as his name was not mentioned when it was originally instructed." Dishes are inter-changed at the discretion of the Master who varies the order of changing them daily to foil the plans of indiscreet men who may pass the information to the women at home. If *selešó* is found in one of the dishes, the diviner is summoned to diagnose "the owner". When she is known the food-carriers reprimand her through the medium of a song, e.g.

Leader	Chorus
<i>Basadi owe...e!</i>	<i>Eya!</i>
<i>Ke ra yéna ngwanyan'e!</i>	<i>Eya!</i>
<i>Xe a re a faxa dipitša!</i>	<i>Eya!</i>
<i>A faxa le se-kuma-mala!</i>	<i>Eya!</i>
<i>A re a loiša a thšela selešó!</i>	<i>Eya!</i>
<i>Xomme le bošexo a lala a nametše thšwene!</i>	<i>Eya!</i>
<i>A o nyaka xo bolaya ngwana wa mang?</i>	<i>Eya!</i>
<i>Xe o foloditše wa xaxo!</i>	<i>Eya!</i>
<i>Mo xaroleng thšithšitho, thak'a mediti!</i>	
Chorus : <i>Xaro! Xaro! Thi-tleirrrrrr! Tsitla!</i>	
<i>Pirrrrrrr!</i>	

(Women owe ...e!)	Yes!
I mean this very woman,	Yes!
Who when twirling the pots,	Yes!
Twirls in the intestine-destroyer,	Yes!
When she stirs it she administers <i>selešó</i> ,	Yes!
And rides on a baboon by night,	Yes!
Whose child do you seek to kill?	Yes!
If you have killed yours in the womb?	Yes!
Tear off her pubic hair, o ye Medititi!	
Chorus : <i>Xaro! Xaro! Thi-tleirrrrrr! Tsitla!</i>	
<i>Pirrrrrrr!</i>	

The last chorus dramatises the action of molesting her because of her malicious intentions. There are no special words for such a song, everyone cudgelling his brains in search of the most vulgar words to put her to shame. In most cases they use this method merely to scare would-be offenders.

A table of small branches (taken from edible bushes, e.g. *moxoto*) is prepared on which the porridge (called *kwalankwata* in their secret language) is spread. In some lodges (e.g. among the Kone) it is spread on flat rocks which are washed and scrubbed daily. Both methods are adopted to avoid the initiates touching the wooden bowls from home, "because they have been in contact with women". Using the whistling language, or any other adopted in the particular school, the initiates are summoned to table, where they sit round strictly in order of seniority. *Hlaxaru* is the secret term for "eat".

Both hands are used for scooping out the *kwalankwata* and there is no relish (*sešeba*) for it.

¹ ROBERTS, N. & WINTER, C. A. T., 1915, p. 565.

No one may leave the table until everyone has stopped eating. There is no confirmation of the statement made by Roberts and Winter, that while they eat "the boys are thrashed with long *moretloa* rods".¹ According to my informants the *mediti* engage in their sham-fights while the boys are eating. It is, however, possible that a few irresponsible men among them may thrash the boys in the manner described but so far as I can gather it is not a general rule. The boys are allowed to toast the porridge on the fire (*ba bo šimêla*).

In the meanwhile the wooden bowls (*mexopo*) are completely immersed in a native dye made of *mmasa* bark and with the aid of instruments, it is rubbed in so as to remove the white lime (*motaxa*). As Roberts and Winter observe: "When asked by the girls what has happened to the dishes, they are told that they have been *licked by the kgoma* for no blame can be attached to anything done by the "*kgoma*". It is for this reason that even where, as among the Pedi proper, the dishes are carried by girls from home to somewhere near the lodge, they may not see them on their return. Thus the impression is given that the male *kgoma* is a tough monster that licks dishes and "preys on cowards". The song is used for chastising those who break this taboo. This particular taboo is a common cause of conflicts between Pagans and Christians.

Dishes that have been badly cooked are thrown away "to emphasise the necessity for the boys to marry wives who can cook well". The women who were responsible for preparing this bad dish are collectively harangued through the medium of a *mediti* song.

Lastly, it is taboo for the wooden bowls themselves to be in the lodge by sunrise (*mexopo xa e selwe*) or to be outside the village by sunset (*mexopo xa e phirimelwe*). Dispatch hours are roughly as follows :

Breakfast: Leave home between 3 and 4 a.m. and return at sunrise or immediately thereafter.

Evening-meal: Leave home between 2 and 3 p.m. and return before sunset.

Content of the Education

The initiates are instructed both individually and collectively. Individuals are made to repeat formulae by attendants who are, as far as possible, members of kin. It is believed that a relative will teach the candidate better than a non-relative. Hence there is keen competition among the attendants when the boys are tested. General instruction, where all the boys come together, is given largely through the song (*ba hlaba molaô*):

"*Madika thšêlang! Thšêlang ke le kwe!*

(Initiates sing! Sing and let me hear you!)

In the first place they are instructed in the use of the secret language. The reasons for using it are obscure but, among others, it is of practical use in that through it they can discuss secrets without fear of being understood by women and the uncircumcised (*mašoboro*). It completes the severance of relations with home life and its delights, stimulates interest, and increases the mysticism of the school. They discard their home-names and adopt new ones. Each name is further camouflaged by being suffixed to an obscure phrase *lyabo*, that is, "that of." Each sentence begins with the phrase *e le bya* (lit. being that of), and its corresponding reply is *e le byôna* (lit. being it). These two phrases are wrongly translated by Roberts and Winter into "Is it the witch?" and "It is the witch", respectively.² This secret language, which contains many archaic words, figures largely in their songs and formulae. It is more or less common among all the tribes so far investigated and may be brought to account for a common origin of the rites themselves. I therefore agree with Roberts that "A careful study of the sacred formulae and hymns of the various Bantu 'Schools' would probably be of great help to the student, who wishes to get back to the original stock language of the race." They also use the whistling language to communicate with one another.

The following values are emphasized during the session: seniority of birth, obedience to authority, respect of elders, loyalty to the chief,

¹ ROBERTS, N. & WINTER, C. A. T., 1915, p. 566.

² ROBERTS, N. & WINTER, C. A. T., 1915, p. 570.

obedience to the father, and disobedience to the mother; courage, endurance, and manhood.¹ These items are impressed upon the initiates largely through formulae, the song, and ritual. There is also a certain amount of dramatisation, as for example, the catching of a living hare (*mmutla*) by the *mampana* initiates which implies the attainment of manhood. Seniority of birth is emphasized through the method of sitting by the fire-side, at table, but particularly *dikxating*, i.e. the ritual thrashings. I found that whenever men argued on questions of seniority of birth the issue always resolved itself quite naturally to: "Who is thrashed first?" Once this question was answered, argument stopped. The symbolism of this *rite of thrashing* comes clearly to light when one sees the "pumpkin chief", (*kxoši ya lerótsé*)² coming before the reigning chief. This is bound up with their religious beliefs and their ideas about the divine right of kings. "A king is born, not made." He may be defeated in battle and suffer humiliation from his inferiors but he still wears the crown and is our intercessor. To ignore him in religious matters would be to invite the wrath and indignation of our ancestors." They also express the same idea idiomatically by saying: "*Naka tša xo rwešwa xa di xomarele hlóxó*" (lit. Self-made horns do not stick on the head).

Respect for elders is taught in a practical way. When an elder sends a boy on an errand, he must learn to obey without question. Throughout the session the young men of the last two initiation regiments (*mephathó*) engage themselves regularly in sham-fights in which the juniors "must surrender to the seniors". That is, even when the seniors are too weak to stop the juniors, the latter must pretend to be defeated. This means that in matters of tribal importance a junior must always give in to a senior. Similarly in an argument the junior must learn always to give his senior the benefit of the doubt. One hears a lot about "I would have hit him were he not my elder" (*moxolwane*), even among the Pedi Amalaita boys in the towns. This partially explains

why many Pedi young men acquiesce in marriages arranged by their elders quite regardless of their natural inclinations.

Obedience to authority is the golden rule that every boy will have learnt by force as a herdboy. The authority of the leader (*nkxwete*) is now replaced by that of the tribe exercised by and through the Master of the Lodge (*Rabadia*). At the same time they learn about the principles underlying the delegation of power and authority which is important in tribal life. "*Mohlanka wa kxoši ke kxoši*" (lit. A chief's representative is like the chief himself). Therefore disobedience to a messenger amounts to contempt of the authority that sent him. The fact that the leader of the boys (*nkxwete*) is made use of in matters of discipline, not only ensures continuity, but further serves as a co-ordinating factor between the old and the new. When this rule is extended it means respect for all those in authority. This explains why some European employers prefer an initiated boy to an uninitiated one.

Growing out of the last point is loyalty to the chief. As among other Bantu speaking tribes, the chief is the symbol of authority and tribal cohesion. Therefore the visit of the chief to the lodge becomes a special occasion. Many of the stringent rules of the lodge may be relaxed as a mark of respect; that is, as an expression of loyalty. Thus we are told: "Sometimes the Paramount Chief will visit a lodge for the *kgoma* dance. When he enters the enclosure the *badikana* prostrate themselves, kneeling with faces to the ground, and clap the palms of their hands together above their heads, remaining in this position for a considerable time. If another chief enters the lodge he is greeted in the same way, but the posture is not maintained for the same length of time. Visitors no of chiefly rank are greeted by the initiates by clapping of hands only."³ The latter is a striking contrast. The idea of relaxing the restrictions or of granting some respite on these occasions may be correlated with the King's birthday honours in England; it may also be correlated with the practice of

¹ Equivalent to the *Ubudoda* of Margaret Read in "The Moral Code of the Ngoni and their former military State", *Africa* 1938, vol. II, p. 4.

² EISELEN, W., "The Sacred Fire of the Bapedi",

S. Afr. J. Sc., 1929, vol. XXVI, p. 549, and FRANZ, G. H., "Some Customs of the Transvaal Basotho", *Bantu Studies*, 1931, p. 244.

³ ROBERTS, N. & WINTER, C. A. T., 1915, p. 571.

releasing prisoners to mark an occasion, e.g. the Royal visit to South Africa in 1947.

Through out the session the chief of the age-group (*kxošana ya Mphathó*), that is, the initiate of highest rank in the school, moves round with an escort or body-guard, the members of which are his near relations—particularly his half-brothers. The latter are trained for their future roles as councillors and advisers of the chief. Loyalty to the reigning chief must be expressed through the *kxošana*. To give him training in the reins of government he is also allowed to try cases between the initiates themselves. He presides over their official meetings and learns the royal method of speaking through an heirarchy of go-betweens (*batseta*). As we have already noted, he does not sleep in the initiates' lodge. So whenever a case arises in his absence, he is summoned to appear in the lodge through the medium of a song. I was told that in the 1890's in one of the Tau lodges at M., two boys, one of whom was the leader of the boys (*nkxwete*), fought in the middle of the night. The bone of contention was a dispute over the leadership. The other contestant in the fight had not been present when the traditional fight for leadership was organized in the days before the opening of the initiation school. He was therefore loathe to obey the leader and in this he was encouraged by boys from his *kxórbó*. Eventually they decided to fight it out. During the course of the fight the latter, finding himself in great difficulty, hit the leader with a stick and fractured one of his toes; and the wound bled terribly. The initiates chanted the appropriate tune and in a moment their *kxošana* was in the lodge. The case was tried and his court found the assailant guilty on three counts: First, for shedding blood which is the prerogative of the reigning chief; secondly, for disregarding the position of a traditional leader, defying his authority, and therefore for contempt of the age-group and of the initiation school itself; thirdly, for using an instrument in fighting "which is nothing short of cowardice". For all these charges he was fined one cow. The reigning chief confirmed their judgment, and one night a cow¹ was stolen

out of his father's kraal and was slaughtered and eaten in the lodge. *Ke manganga-hlaya* (something equivalent to "court expenses" in European courts).

Besides, those who are privileged to be initiated at the same time with the heir apparent, see certain *dikóma* which are not allowed to see light in ordinary sessions. This was revealed in a tribal dispute over the chieftainship at P. somewhere in the 1930's. Evidence was being heard in an open air meeting under mimosa trees, and as it was a *pitso*, Christians and non-Christians sat side by side. What divided them was not religion but the rival claimants to the chieftainship, and so on both sides there were Christians and non-Christians. In the heat of the discussion, one man asked why P. had been shown the *kóma-tona* (i.e. the big secret) during his initiation if he was not the rightful heir to the chieftainship. One of the Native Commissioners asked: "And what is the *kóma-tona*?" Instead of answering this question the initiated men murmured among themselves saying: "How can we reveal the secrets of the lodge to the uncircumcised (*mašoboro*)?"

Another point, which is often ignored by observers, and yet hangs on the above-mentioned (i.e. the *kóma-tona*) is one concerning the coronation of a chief. We are so accustomed to coronations (or installations, to use the more familiar term which is applied to native chiefs) being celebrated at home and in public places that we assume that every tribe does so. Among the Pedi the heir apparent is crowned during initiation and since the celebration in itself constitutes one of the lessons of the lodge, I want to refer to it briefly here. It may be as simple as it is among the Tau where the heir apparent is made to stand on a "sacred" rock, made holy by the fact that their first initiated chief stood on it, and all give him a royal salute in acknowledgement; or it may be elaborate and cumbersome as it is among the Kone. Among the Kone a black bull is slaughtered for the occasion. (Some say it must be strangled by the men and others say that it may be killed

¹ A beast slaughtered in the lodge is called a Koedoe (*thólo*).

with instruments). Some of its blood is preserved in a sacred vessel and put away in *Rabadia's* private lodge, which serves as a robing room at the same time. The young chief is also kept secretly in this lodge so that the others may not see him before the coronation ceremony. A crown of *kweekgras* (*mohkwa*) is improvised through which two blades of an assegai are stuck. It is then immersed in the blood. While it is thus soaking, fires are extinguished and a new fire is drilled in the traditional method on which a slab of rock is heated. The young chief is masked round the head so as to avoid blood-stains on his faces. Then the crown is placed on his head with the blood running down his body. The heated slab of rock is placed on top and blood from the sacred vessel is poured on it so as to cool it. At this stage the young man is made to appear before the assembly—consisting of initiates and men who have come from far and near for this auspicious occasion. All shout the royal salute of "*Pula! Pula! Pula!*" (Rain!). An old man (*mo-kxalabyé*), selected on grounds of age and seniority, officiates. After declaring him "chief", he addresses the gathering exhorting the people to recognize the young man as chief and to obey his commands. He winds up by entreating the young chief to rule his subjects well and firmly when he succeeds. Praise-stanzas appropriate to the occasion, are recited and there is much singing and jubilation. Fires are now kindled from the royal one and there is much feasting.

A few things may be noted in connection with this coronation. The first is that the chief is expected to bring rain to his people. The black bull represents the black rain-clouds while the royal salute is in itself an expression of this idea. Secondly, he must be a brave and courageous leader in war; hence the blades of an assegai. Thirdly, fire is a symbol of rank. As Eiselen¹ puts it: "Thus the central fire stands for the authority of the chief, but the chief is the country and, accordingly, it is essential for the well-being of the tribe that this fire should never go out." Fourthly, it is important for religious purposes. If the black bull dies without giving them much trouble, it is taken as a sign that all is well:

"*Badimo ba na le rena*" (The gods are with us). If not, "*Badimo ba a xana*" (The gods are refusing). As neighbouring friendly chiefs are specially represented on this occasion, it is also a diplomatic occasion. Those who witness it are expected to support the young chief when he succeeds.

According to Harries: "Three regular and severe chastisements are said to be administered to each initiate during the course of the lodge. The first is to impress upon the boy the necessity of obeying, respecting, and never violating the confidence of his chief. The second, to emphasize obedience to his father and the third disobedience to his mother."² The latter may sound absurd but it is in keeping with Pedi theory that a woman is lower than a man. A man always says to his son: "*O seke wa kwa mma'xo*" (Don't listen to your mother). The same rule is impressed upon the initiate by the *mediti* who thrash him and say: "Don't listen to your mother but to your father" (*O seke wa kwa mma'xo, O kwê rra'xo*). We must also accept Harries's explanation to the effect that "particularly does it apply to a chief's son in order to obviate the danger of his being coerced by his mother into doing acts against the chief or detrimental to the well-being of the tribe, before or after he succeeds to the chieftainship."

Courage and endurance are emphasized right at the beginning when the boy is circumcised. He is not supposed to show any sign of pain, to say nothing of crying, while the operation is performed. To do so is cowardice: "*Ke botsopya*." For this reason some of my informants deny the statement by Harries and others to the effect that "The men in charge of those awaiting their turn keep up a terrific din in order to drown the cries of the one undergoing the operation." In admitting that the men do "keep up a terrific din" they further point out that it is intended to scare away women and the uncircumcised men (*mašoboro*). They appeal to his emotional sentiment by saying: "*Monna ke nku, o llêla teng*" (A man is like a sheep, he does not cry out aloud). Hence-

¹ "The Sacred Fire of the Bapedi of the Transvaal", *S. Afr. J. Sc.*, 26/1929, pp. 547-52.

² HARRIES, C. H. L., 1929, p. 71.

forth every ordeal they are forced to undergo is a severe test of courage and endurance.

The *Madikana* are further taught the traditional methods of hunting and with them, tribal warfare. Once game has been surrounded, the side through which it escapes pays a fine. Mankillers—lions, buffaloes, leopards—when brought down, are taken to the lodge with an excited tribal dance (*moxobó*). Those who played a leading role in the killing are as it were, knighted (*ba lomišwa*). The procedure of knighting is as follows: White marks are made on his face while he is squatting. A raw piece of meat is pinned on the sharp point of an assegai planted in the ground. Then he hops like a frog to reach the assegai and to bite off the piece of meat. As his blood is believed to be "hot" (i.e. contaminated), he is given medicine to cool him down. This ceremony is conducted by one of the brave warriors (*ba bolaileng dithšvene*). The skins of the animals are preserved and later given to the chief.

Sex Education

Harries writes: "It is generally understood that all manner of lewd instruction, pertaining to sexual matters, is given at the *bodikane*, but this has been emphatically denied, and the assurance given that the opposite sex may never be mentioned by or to the initiates."¹ This statement is contradicted by Winter who writes: "Good and bad teachings are strangely mixed. An instance of a good one: An elder boy says to the *Madikana*, 'I am going to sleep with a girl or woman'—then all must cry out: '*Matsoera!*' spitting out before him, as before a nasty filthy thing. When crossing footpaths, where women usually go or have just passed, all cry out the same bad word. It seems to be impressed upon them, both the use of women, and at the same time to despise all women, as a lower, unclean class".² The latter is right in pointing out that "good and bad teachings are strangely mixed". But we must not try to make our own judgments of what is good or bad in these teachings. Rather let us try to discover their significance and symbolism. Let us regard them as means and not as ends.

¹ HARRIES, C. H. L., 1929, p. 71.

It has been noted that in the pre-initiation days, the boys enjoy relative freedom with the girls, while *total abstinence* is expected of them in sexual matters. Now, those who are known to have violated this rule and seduced girls are taken severely to task. When such a one bleeds profusely after the operation, they torment him saying: "It is the blood of women" (*Ke madi a basadi*). They are called names and in many indirect ways reminded of their "bad" behaviour. Among those, it is the boy who has impregnated a girl who is the subject of severe illtreatment, "for he has eaten men's food" (*O jelé dijó tša banna*). He is overburdened with nicknames that have reference to "a lover of women", e.g. *Rabasadi*. It is to such a one that the cruel practice of pressing his fingers between small sticks (*xo amuša dipudi*) is applied. When he misses a tune during the singing they say: "You must be thinking of so-and-so's vagina", and so forth. I was told that when they fetch wood he carries a bigger log, or one that has ants or termites in it and is thrashed when he tries to scratch them off.

It is impressed upon them that now that they have attained the status of manhood, they must have no dealings with uninitiated girls. "This is a condescension which amounts to exposing one's sexual organs to an uncircumcised girl" (*O seke wa bônélwa ke lethumaša*). They are also warned against the danger and impurity of a woman in her menstruation through the song:

"*Mosadi xe a hlapile, o seke; o dithšila*
O tla hwa. Leropo 'lekebya, madi a basadi,
Ba re ba hlapile xa ba le ilele; meetse le nwa nabó."
 (A woman who is menstruating is not only defiled but dangerous;
 So don't approach her. Even when she is menstruating
 She does not observe the water-taboo,
 And hence drinks out of the same vessel with you.)

A menstruating woman is supposed to drink water in a special vessel so as to warn the men to keep away from her.

² WINTER, C. A. T., 1913, p. 134.

Handicrafts, particularly wood-carving, form part of the training. The initiates carve models of birds, animals, insects, reptiles, household utensils, etc. We as herdboys used to come across some of these models in small heaps all over the veld, but owing to the fear of black magic, no one dared to touch them. The most important models, however, are those carved by experts because they are used as aids to memory in the teaching. During initiation a boy discards his name of childhood and is given one of manhood by which he will be known in the future. For the sake of impression, "These names are given in the following way : For some days the men (or it may be a single individual) who are most expert in the art of carving remain all day in the *mphathô*, spending their time in carving wooden figures of animals, which are ornamented with poker-work. The most important of these carvings is the figure of a rhinoceros. As the boys sit by the fire-side in the evening this figure is drawn slowly past them on the ground. As it passes, each initiate stabs at it with a miniature spear declaring the name of honour which he has adopted. At the same time he is expected to recount the exploits which he is going to perform as a man."¹ I quote here verbatim from one of my informants:

Among the Tau, these names are recited after the lion *kôma*. The lion model is hidden in a thicket, poised as if ready to charge. Invitations are sent round to the effect that men should rally to "*boxiša* the *madikana* the lion *kôma*". All the boys are armed with assegais, battle-axes, spears, and knob-kerries. Each boy in his turn is first thrashed and then taken round to meet the lion. It is impressed upon him that this particular lion will not molest a brave boy. "Get near it and look straight into its eyes to show it that now you are a man (*monna*) and do not fear wild beasts." When he has shown his courage and bravery, he is made to recite his name of manhood ('*Ina la bonna*). The *kxošana ya mphathô* is dealt with more roughly than the rest of the other boys because the Tau cannot bear to be ruled by a coward. After seeing it I recited the following line :

"*Nna moxale se-xahlana le tau ka e tomolêla mahlô ya be ya thšaba.*"

(I the brave one who stared a lion right in the face until it ran away).

I understand that among the Tau there are six *dikômas* altogether. The last and most important one is the hyena-*kôma*. It is important because through it they acknowledge the fact that initiation was introduced to them by the Ba-bina-Phiri (those who revere the hyena). Its celebration is a sign that the session is about to come to an end. The chief receives the following message from the Master : "*Kôma e budule*" (lit the *kôma* is cooked). That is, the initiates have completed their course of training. This message is passed round to friendly neighbouring chiefs. On the appointed day, men leave home in full armour ostensibly to give the impression that the male *kôma* is a fierce beast which can only be brought down by brave men in correct armour. It must be forced to release the boys to return home. Women understand this language and prepare themselves for the welcome reception.

Before the closing a special ceremony is performed in order to give a name to the age-group as a whole. Among the Pedi proper there are separate names for the sexes. But among the Kone and the Tau both sexes adopt the same name. In future when a man takes an oath, he swears by it, e.g. "By *Matuba*" (*Ka Matuba*).

Among the Mampana people a last hunting expedition is organized during which the initiates must catch a hare and bring it alive to the lodge. It is given to the Master who praises them and tells them that they have now attained the status of men and must prepare themselves to return home. I was told that "the catching of a live hare dramatises the attainment of the new social status. If anyone inquires about initiation, tell him : "*Koma ke Mmutla*" (*Kôma* is a hare). Then the farewell song is taught.

"*Re hlaba tlou ka diloka
Marope re tlola re hlaba dithaka.*"

(We stab the elephant with assegais,
Make friends wherever you go.)

¹ ROBERTS, N. & WINTER, C. A. T., 1915, p. 576.

In these lines *kóma* is likened to an elephant, and the analogy is that as men, we are as mighty as an elephant.

Closing Ceremony

Phiri and *Phišana* monuments are erected with slabs of rock and remain standing on the spot on which the lodge stood, being a concrete representation of the regiment (*moroto*). They also serve as a time-piece, used particularly for estimating the length of the period of a chief's reign—"He initiated so many regiments."

"This closing ceremony is called *Go aloga*, or the "gathering up." The father of each initiate secretly obtains possession of a sheep-skin. These skins are brayed and used for making *stert-riemen* and *hlabe*s for the initiates.—The morning following they are taken outside the enclosure, and standing on the outspread skins, the body of each initiate is smeared with red ochre by some relative. He is then arrayed in *stert-riem* and *hlaba* and at the same time severely beaten for the last time. A procession is then formed, which marches away from the lodge to the kraal, singing songs of triumph and victory. Nobody is allowed to look back to the *mphathó*. Each one carries a bundle of wood with which to supply the fire at the chief's kraal."¹ The young men are now called *dialoxa* (i.e. survivors—"because they have survived the hardships of the *kóma*") and the *kxošana* leads them, swinging the Red of Honour (*sefoka*) by his side. The lodge is demolished behind them and burnt down together with everything they used during the session. That evening deaths are announced by the method of dropping small gourds (*dixórwana*) containing fat and red ochre at the homes of the deceased. Now the people may mourn for them.

It is said in characteristic language: "They have been eaten by the *kóma*." Henceforward their names become taboo.

That night the young men must fast ritually, and so do the girls of the corresponding age-group and the women whose first sons (*maitšibuló*) are among the graduands (*ba ba iléla*). The following day the girls rush to the river early in the morning "to wash off their dust" (*ba ba hlapéla*) and the young men go out to the veld without a morsel of food. I understand that this fast is not complete, food being smuggled to the boys by trusted old women (*bakxekolo*). All break the fast in the evening. The young men then remain at the capital for the next ten days and disperse after being lavishly entertained by the chief. On the tenth day they are addressed by one of the wise beards of the tribe who stresses the fact that they are now men and must put away all childish things. After the day's outing, each one returns to his home. He does not speak to women and uninitiated men unless they pay something "to open his mouth". Still more, he may not reveal his name of manhood to anyone "unless he pays something". They admonish them by suggesting that "the one who violates this rule will get yellow teeth". The most common articles used for "buying" them are bangles, necklaces, and other personal effects. The father may now give the young man his share of the family's estate. Clearly the idea behind it is to give him a start in life. It also emphasizes the fact that they paid a price for getting their manhood. When a young man is willing to recite his name of manhood, he says: "*Kxomo 'a thswa*," (lit. The cow spits). The traditional reply is: "*E xangwa ke mang?*" (lit. Who milks it?) Then he introduces himself by saying: "It is milked by me, so-and-so of so-and-so..."²

(to be concluded)

¹ ROBERTS & WINTER, op. cit., p. 577.

² For a collection of these names, read: PHALA, D. M., *Kxomo 'a Thswa*. (Afrikaans Pers. Bpk.: 1935)

THE STATIVE CONJUGATION IN ZULU, SOTHO AND VENDA

E. WESTPHAL

SYNOPSIS

Verb forms denoting states are described as part of S. Bantu verb conjugations. In order to analyse them accurately it is necessary to distinguish "meaning" and "reference". Secondly, in analysis, the principle is that where there is no formal (lexical, morphological or syntactical) distinction the attempt to recognize "referential" distinctions will mostly prove to be unfruitful. A selector system of verb forms (based on syntactical considerations and comprising the "indicative mood") is then established and the statives are dealt with as part of this system. The statives do not employ the full range of forms in the selector system.

G. Fortune's paper on "Inchoatives" is discussed and an attempt is made to show that, while a case could be made out for "inchoatives" in Zulu where there are formal distinctions, there are no formal distinctions in Venda and Karanga to justify the assumption that "Shona" has "inchoative" and "non-inchoative" stems. What Fortune describes as "inchoative" is shown to be a result of the "time reference" of the verb stem.

The languages dealt with are Zulu, Southern Sotho, Venda, and Karanga. Typical statives are the words for "be asleep", "be hungry", "be satisfied", "be tired", "be well", "be warm". By "stative" is meant no more than a stem which "selects" a certain series of tenses out of the selector system.

IN DEALING WITH the "statives" it may prove fruitful to discuss two recent papers in *African Studies*:

1. "The conjugation of inchoative verbs in Shona" by George Fortune, S.J. (*African Studies*, Sept. 1949), and

2. "The indicative mood and its classification in Southern Bantu" by E. Westphal (*African Studies*, Dec. 1945). This 1945 paper is quoted by Fortune, but, as he has quoted me out of context, I shall take the opportunity of contrasting our views.

The 1945 paper dealt with what I described as a Basic Conjugation in contrast to the Compounded Conjugations. It then went on to describe the contrast of Stative and non-Stative conjugations. Fortune considers my use of the term "stative" misleading "because it conveys the

idea that these verbs are used exclusively in the stative or perfect tenses". Actually there is no mention of *stative tenses* in my paper.

In part Fortune's difficulties are terminological. He wishes to equate the term "stative" or "stative conjugation" with his own term "stative tenses". In part his difficulties are due to the fact that Zulu and Xhosa (which he quotes as "Nguni") are not similar to "Shona" in their manner of expressing statives. Excepting for a few words, "Shona" has nothing that is the equivalent of the Nguni *-ILE* suffix. Furthermore "Shona" is not a language or even a unified language, although it has a unified orthography. The six dialect groups (Zezuru, Karanga, Kalanga, Korekore, Ndaue and Manyika) each have a number of sub-dialects. It is therefore possible that there are differences even within the Shona group. The orthographic work on Shona was undertaken

by Prof. C. M. Doke on the request of the Southern Rhodesian Government. The work was undertaken to solve specific orthographic problems of the "Mashonaland" territory, but it is not and does not claim to be a full and ultimate treatise on the grammar of a "Shona group". The term "Shona" should therefore be avoided wherever possible in grammatical treatises.

In the main Fortune's problems arise out of the method he employs to analyse widely divergent facts of widely divergent languages. In the first place Zulu (Nguni) and Southern Sotho have a suffix *-ILE* which is closely associated with statives. Venda has no such suffix or anything approximating it. Karanga (Shona) has a few words which are (inconclusively) associated with this suffix, but it does not employ the suffix *-ILE* as a tense sign generally. It is obvious that two very different analyses may result from the treatment of the stative in any one of these languages or language groups.

In dealing with the subject of "tenses" quite generally, two types of languages may immediately be recognized: (a) those employing the suffix *-ILE* (Zulu, Xhosa, S. Sotho) and (b) those employing no such suffix (Venda, Karanga). In Zulu it is possible to discern statives by the fact that they have the suffix *-ile*, e.g. *-lambile* (be hungry) cp. *-lamba* (get hungry), or by the fact that they have a suffix which is mutually exclusive with *-ile* in certain stems, e.g. *-fumene* (have found) and *-fumana* (find), *-judumele* (be warm) and *-judumala* (get warm), *-lele* (be asleep) and *-lala* (go to sleep). These stems distinguish themselves as statives from similar ones—also employing the suffix *-ile*—in their negatives, e.g. *balambile* (they are hungry) and *abalambile* (they are not hungry), *zilambile* and *azilambile*, *kulambile* and *akulambile*, etc. but *bahambile* (they walked) and *abahambanga* (they did not walk), *zihambile* and *azihambanga*, *kuhambile* and *akuhambanga*. It is therefore possible to know whether a word is a stative or not in Zulu by employing this negative test. In S. Sotho it is more difficult to distinguish these stative and non-stative stems; there is no distinctive negative, e.g. *balapile* (they are hungry)

and *habaalapa* (they are not hungry). This means that there are factors operative in Zulu which are not operative in S. Sotho and we shall deal with this problem at a later stage in this paper.

In Venda and (with a few exceptions like *-gere*) in Karanga it is impossible to distinguish statives by their suffixes. Both *-neta* (be, become tired) and *-amba* (speak) have the same grammatical structure in Venda: both are disyllabic and have the suffix *-a*. Furthermore both have the forms of the present "tense" *ndianeta* and *ndiaamba*, *anthineta* and *athiambi*. Both have the forms *ndoneta* and *ndoamba*, with the negatives *athongoneta* and *athongoamba*. Formally they are therefore indistinguishable. It is from a consideration of these facts that C. M. Doke places the burden of his entry in *Bantu Linguistic Terminology* on the use of the stative. Fortune criticizes the emphasis on "use".

Fortune deals with the problem of statives in a language where there is no differentiating form as in Zulu. He does, however, recognize a difference in grammatical behaviour which he characterizes by the terms "inchoative" and "non-inchoative". He feels compelled to find an explanation for this difference and the explanation he offers is that "inchoative verbs" have an inchoative meaning, viz. "become...", e.g. the following quoted from his paper: *kuneta* (to become tired), *kugara* (to become seated), as against *kuona* (to see) and *kuenda* (to go). He finds that inchoative verb stems have as their "common characteristic" the "idea of becoming". He contrasts these with non-inchoative verb stems in which the "idea of action" is expressed. He says: "The first of these classes of verb stems I will call the class of inchoative verbs because the basic idea of the verb stem in them all is that of becoming, of tending towards the completed state of what they imply."

By "basic idea" Fortune seems to mean the "meaning" of a series of forms of which *kuneta* is but one. Now, the problem is: can we explain the differences in grammatical behaviour of these two classes as differences in "basic idea", i.e. "meaning"? If we do, we must recognize the errors that may arise out of giving a "meaning" to a form or a series of forms. After all, a meaning

is no more than an approximation within the same language or a translation into another language. We contrast, e.g. *kuneta*, with the English "to become tired" or with some approximation in Shona, but neither of these will have exactly the same reference as *kuneta*. The meaning of *kuneta*, i.e. its approximation or translation, must not be confused with its *reference*. Besides this, we must not lose sight of the probability that there is no other word in Shona with exactly the same reference as *kuneta*.

If we pursue the concept, we must ask ourselves whether we can discover such a basic idea of "becoming..." in a number of sentences containing, say, the stem *-neta*, e.g. *ndinoneta*, p. 133 (I become tired) as against *ndaneta* or *ndakaneta*, p. 134 (I am tired). If it is possible to recognize the basic idea of "becoming..." in an isolated stem *-neta* then it should also be possible to recognize it in this stem when it occurs in sentences like those quoted above from Fortune's paper.

If the basic idea of *-neta* is "become tired" then Fortune has not shown this (a) in his translations of *ndaneta*, *ndakaneta*, etc., as "I am tired" instead of "I have become tired", and (b) in his treatment of these forms with the present tense. Neither of these reflect his recognition of a "basic idea" of "becoming..." What Fortune characterizes as "basic idea of becoming" is in reality due to the fact that these stems describe an action which cannot persist for a period of time but must result, in a *relatively short* space of time, in a state. That this state is best translated into English by "be..." and the action by "become..." is irrelevant to the linguistic facts of at least one of the languages of the Shona groups, viz. Karanga.

On the other hand, with *-gara* (sit down) and *-gere* (be seated) there is a formal difference which can, without doubt, be associated with a "basic idea" for each of the two series. That this basic idea in the *-gara* series is inchoative is possible. The element contained in the *-gere* series is probably connected with that already recognized by Meinhof in many Bantu languages and in Venda in such words as *mulwadze* (a sick person) but cp. *-lwala* or *ulwala* (be sick). The

comparison of a substantival with a predicative stem is not unintentional here, since *ndigere* (I am seated) has many more similarities with a conjugation of copulatives than it has with a conjugation of straightforward predicatives of action or "non-state". In the first place *ndigere* lacks the tense sign *-no*—although it has the present tense concord *ndi-* for the 1st pers. s. This tense sign is also lacking with copulative forms. The form *ndigere* should not be compared to *nda(ka)neta* since different prefixes are employed. Although *ndinogara* (I am sitting down) and *ndinoneta* (I am getting tired) are formed in the same way, it serves no useful purpose to compare *ndigere* (I am seated) with *ndaneta* (I am tired) in the same manner.

It is clear that if a basic idea of "becoming..." as distinct from "being..." can be recognized, then these basic ideas should not be confined to what Fortune describes as "inchoatives". On the strength of his Shona examples we can see that the "inchoativeness" is not a function of a verb stem but belongs to the whole word. We need only compare such forms as Zulu *uhambile* (he has left, i.e. is gone) with *uhambile* (he walked—recent) or *uyagula* (he is sick) which is not a stative in Zulu, to understand the difficulties of analysis we would create if we were to recognize an inchoative basic idea in these languages.

We have so far dealt with the problems of translation or approximation and have indicated that Fortune is attempting to derive a differential grammatical behaviour and consequent treatment from the existence of a basic idea. Another way—the reverse of Fortune's method—is to discover the different types of grammatical behaviour and then attempt to study the common elements.

Of the languages we are dealing with, Venda is extreme in having no suffix *-ILE* and no stems of the *-gere* type that exist in Karanga. It will therefore be useful to start our analysis with Venda where there are no formal differences that might mislead us into making premature grammatical categories. The orthography used in Venda and S. Sotho is the same as that used in my 1945 paper. It is not a practical orthography since it is primarily designed for academic purposes

which are to facilitate the comparison of various Southern Bantu languages. The tense "signs" are shown in square brackets, e.g. *ndakaneta* [-a/ka . . . -a] (I am tired). The hyphens show that the formative is not a syllable on its own; the diagonal strokes separate off distinguishable juxtaposed formatives; the dots show where variable elements such as stems and class prefixes have been omitted. A similar method of marking the tense signs is used by M. Guthrie in *The Classification of Bantu Languages*. The languages are dealt with individually.

VENDA

If, in pursuance of formal and empirical principle, we choose a limited number of tense forms in Venda we can attempt to discover whether all verb stems and other predicative cores can be used in them. There is no reason why we should choose this limited number of tense forms and not that—our choice is at first random and arbitrary. However, if we experiment with sufficient patience and with a sufficient number of forms, we will find that the forms begin to group themselves. It may take many years to do this. For those who have insight into the language or a similar language it is not necessary to compile this type of statistical information—although at certain stages in an investigation it may be useful to make extracts from such a hypothetical statistical compilation. However, every linguist must constantly ask himself "How would my findings be affected if it were actually possible to make such statistical compilations?" As linguists we are concerned with the results of compilations—not with the compilations themselves.

It is therefore sufficient for the linguist to recognize certain linguistic entities and proceed from these as if he had conducted exhaustive experiments. These entities are the basis of our analysis. Now in Venda we select 9 tense forms for our analysis. We select just these 9 tense forms because we know that they form linguistic entities of various patterns and various groups. To this

we must add that the sentence is our starting point in any analysis. Within sentences we may discover entities which we term "predicatives".

When we speak of a predicative we speak in terms of sentence components. By predicative we mean, for purposes of this paper, the smallest unit of a sentence, cp.

musadzi uwhidza vhana (the w man is calling the children)

uwhidza vhana (he is calling the children)

musadzi uavhavidza (the woman is calling them)

uavhavidza (she is calling them)

and also:

munna ndikhosi (the man is a chief)

ndikhosi (he is a chief).

The smallest remaining unit of a sentence containing all the references of the maximum, can be compared to any other sentence we have treated in a similar manner. For this reason I consider the contrast of *uavhavidza* and *ndikhosi* as completely valid. Although they differ in their components they are indistinguishable at a certain stage in our investigations and must therefore be treated as similar in behaviour. Once we have established them as comparable entities we can show their similarities in grammatical duty and in structure.

Starting from the sentence it is not possible to distinguish the two minimum sentences illustrated above until we examine the behaviour of their components. For this reason Doke unifies these two basic types of sentences by the use of the single term "predicative". If we recognize the predicative as an entity we cannot avoid treating the tense forms of the copulatives together with those of the verbs. What we recognize as "tense" behaviour is common to all predicatives: it is a function of the total predicative and not of elements within it. M. Guthrie refers to this feature in his *Classification of Bantu Languages*, when he writes on p. 68, par. 11: "It is rarely possible to indicate a distinction of past or future time by means of tense signs alone [in Zone S]."

When now we select nine tense forms we do this in order to demonstrate a certain type of behaviour within the entity of nine forms. To illustrate this behaviour we first of all establish a selector series with the verb stem *-shuma* (work) and shall then replace this by other stems or cores each of which will illustrate a further series. The system was also described in the 1945 paper.

A. The Basic tenses:

- A1. *uashuma* [...a...-a] (he is working)
 2. *oshuma* [-o...-a] (he worked)
 3. *uqoshuma* [...qo...-a] (he will work)

B. The Compounded (Past) tenses:

- B1. *ovha atshishuma* [(...) ...tshi...-a] (he was working)
 2. *ovha oshuma* [(...) -o...-a] (he had worked)
 3. *ovha atshiqoshuma* [(...) ...tshi/qo...-a] (he was going to work)

C. The Compounded (Future) tenses:

- C1. *uqovha atshishuma* [(...) ...tshi...-a] (he will be working)
 2. *udovha oshuma* [(...) -o...-a] (he will have worked)
 3. *uqovha atshiqoshuma* [(...) ...tshi/qo...-a] (he will be going to work)

Now these references and relationships will persist in an identical system when we add certain formatives, e.g. the formative *-q̄i-*:

- A1. *uq̄ishuma* [...q̄i...-a] (he works—for reasons known to himself)
 2. *oq̄ishuma* (he worked—do.)
 3. *uq̄oq̄ishuma* (he will work—do.)
 B1. *ovha atshiq̄ishuma* (he was working—do.)
 2. *ovha oq̄ishuma* (he had worked—do.)
 3. *ovha atshiq̄oq̄ishuma* (he will be going to work—do.)
 C1. *uq̄ovha atshiq̄ishuma* (he will be working—do.)
 2. *uq̄ovha oq̄ishuma* (he will have worked—do.)
 3. *uq̄ovha atshiq̄oq̄ishuma* (he will be going to work—do.)

The fact that *-di-* is neutral to the time reference of these tenses is further illustrated by its possible inclusion in the first section, viz. *uq̄ivha atshishuma*, *oq̄ivha atshishuma*, *uq̄oq̄ivha atshishuma*, etc. which are present, past and future resp. This formative carries no reference which is incompatible with the temporal reference of the total predicative. In contrast with these we can show that some formatives (e.g. *-no-*, *-khaq̄i-*) carry such an incompatible reference. As soon as we try to introduce these formatives into our selector series (with *-shuma*) we find gaps in it:

- A1.
 2. *onoshuma* [-o/no...-a] (he has already worked)
 3.

- B1.
 2. *ovha onoshuma* [(...) -o/no...-a] (he had already worked)
 3.

- C1.
 2. *uq̄ovha onoshuma* [(...) -o/no...-a] (he will already have worked)
 3.

As soon as the formative *-no-* is introduced it is impossible to say *anoshuma* or *uq̄onoshuma*. It will be observed that it is only possible to have *-no-* in a No. 2 tense. If we now substitute the formative *-khaq̄i-* in our selector series we will find that this requires No. 1 tenses only:

- A1. *ukhaq̄ishuma* [...kha/q̄i...-a] (he is still working)
 2.
 3.
 B1. *ovha atshikhaq̄ishuma* 1 [(...) ...tshi/kha/q̄i...-a] (he was still working)
 2.
 3.
 C1. *uq̄ovha atshikhaq̄ishuma* [(...) ...tshi/kha/q̄i...-a] (he will still be working)
 2.
 3.

Examples of incompatible reference of formatives can be multiplied without end. There is an almost total incompatibility of formatives in the future or no. 3. tense. This fact will lead us at a later stage in this paper to make the observation that the 1 and 2 tenses have a greater priority than 3 and that they are a primary contrast within themselves.

Frequently the incompatibility of reference may depend on the particular reference of the predicative core or verb stem—but *not* because they contain an inchoative idea of "becoming . . .". The compatibility depends on temporal factors. The copulatives contain incompatible references:

A1. *ndimuthu* [*ndi...*] (he is a person)

2.

3.

B1. *ovha emuthu* [*-o...-a e...*] (he was a person)

2.

3.

C1. *uḍovha emuthu* [*...ḍo...-a e...*] (he will be a person)

2.

3.

N.B. The *ndi-* is invariable no matter what the class and alternates with the negative *asi-*, e.g. *asimuthu* (he is not a person). The definiteness of this form, i.e. whether we translate it as "he" or "it", viz. "it is a man", depends entirely on what precedes. In other words, *ndi-* has no equivalent in English, not even a reasonably approximate one. The formative *e-* is equally invariable and alternates with *ndi-* in participial or dependent position. Its negative is *esi-*.

Certain predicative stems seem to contain incompatible references e.g. *-dzula*:

A1.

2. *odzala* [*o...*] (he is sitting)

3.

B1.

2. *ovhu odzula* [*-o...a -o...*] (he was sitting)

3.

C1.

2. *uḍovha odzula* [*...ḍo...-a -o...*] (he will be sitting)

3.

If we limit our series to just these forms it is impossible to say anything about the behaviour of the suffix since this is always *-a* even in the negative, e.g. *hongodzula* [*(h)a -o/ngo...*] (he is not sitting), *ovha asongodzula* [*-o...-a ...so/ngo...*] (he was not sitting). Now *-dzula* is one of the Venda stems which can be compared to Fortune's *-neta* is Shona. There are certain gaps in the apparent series we have shown here. In Venda, as in Karanga, these gaps correspond to other existing forms when we translate the stem *-dzula* with an inchoative meaning of "become seated" viz.:

A1. *ndiadzula* [*...a...-a*] (I am sitting down, i.e. I am becoming seated)

2.

3. *ndiḍodzula* [*...ḍo...-a*] (I shall sit down)

B1. *ndovha nditshidzu'a* (I was sitting down)

2.

3. *ndovha nditshiḍodzula* (I was going to sit down)

C1. *ndiḍovha nditshidzula* (I shall be sitting down)

2.

3. *ndiḍovha nditshiḍodzula* (I shall be going to sit down)

The tense signs are identical with those of the selector series with *-shuma*.

The fact that the no. 2 tense is missing in this series and present in the previous series, and the fact that nos. 1 and 3 are missing in the previous series are clearly an indication that, in part, the difficulties are due to the inadequacy of our English translation. It is useful to translate the stem as "be seated" in the first series and as "become seated" in the second one, but this has no bearing on the linguistic facts in Venda. This is true of stems like *-neta* in Shona although it does not hold good for stems like *-gara* and *-gere*. We must look elsewhere for the explanation of this behaviour.

Fortune's difficulties arise out of the fact that there are sometimes no English equivalents with identical grammatical behaviour to the Shona words he is dealing with. He finds it necessary to discover a class of words whose characteristic is the idea of "becoming . . .". It is obvious why he must then find the entry in *Bantu Linguistic Terminology* which emphasizes *use* in certain tenses, inadequate. He complains that although Doke's entry is headed "Stative verbs" the "burden of the note is about the stative *use* of certain verbs in stative *tenses*". But a comparison of the two series with *-dxula* above show that it is precisely the tenses which create the need for the two different English translations—not the stems. In the other languages of the Union the equivalent tense forms show similar discrepancies and these will require further investigation. Fortune claims that these forms were confused in my 1945 paper. He claims that there is a confusion of the subjunctive (a term which I do not use and a topic which, as the title shows, was excluded from my discussion) and the remote past. These forms are dealt with below.

In considering the best method of treatment for such stems as *-dxula* one must agree that there are two types of behaviour. That, in the case of the verb stems, this different behaviour arises from the existence of two different types of stem seems possible. In this respect one must agree with Fortune. What then is the reason? In the first place our tense forms have a specific time reference. In the second place different verb stems fulfil certain time requirements. Some take place over a long period of time, others over a shorter; some have come to emphasize the beginning of the action, others the culmination of the action; still others emphasize the fact of the action and have nothing to say about its beginning or end. If any of the time requirements of a verb stem are incompatible with the time reference of a tense form or series we find the gaps already mentioned in our selector series. Thus we find a number of verb stems which are rarely used in the past or in the future: e.g. *-levha* (tease), rarely occurs in the past as *olevha* (he teased) and almost never in the future as

uḍolevha (he will tease). Others again are rarely used in the present or in the future, e.g. *-neta* (tire) since it is difficult to distinguish where "getting tired" ends and "being tired" begins. If we were to place *-neta* within our selector system we would find its behaviour to be as follows:

Az. *oneta* (he is tired)

Bz. *ovha oneta* (he was tired)

A3. *uḍoneta* (he will get tired)

Amongst the many interesting things this series illustrates is the fact that frequency of usage is very closely associated with the reality and with the growth of a distinct series.

The treatment of these stems should be twofold: (i) they must be dealt with in the lexical analysis where, ideally, their time requirements should be indicated in languages like Venda, and (ii) the series in which they occur should be treated in the predicative analysis. This will go a long way to clarify the use of such verbs as *-amba* (speak) whose past tense *oamba* corresponds to the English "he has spoken" rather than "he spoke". The present tense of this form is *ukhouamba* (he is speaking) and not *uyaamba*. This latter form is used when *-amba* has an objectival import, e.g. *uamba tshiVenda* (he speaks Venda). On the other hand *-lwala* (be sick) is rarely found as *ukhoulwala*. If you wish to say "he is sick" the form *uyakwala* is preferable. The past and future tenses are resp. *ovha atshilwala* (he was sick) and *uḍolwala* (he will get sick). Now all these differences are clearly part of a lexical description, yet we can also show the tense associations they require as grammatical series. In our grammar we will therefore treat all the possible types of behaviour which depend on the time requirements of stems and formatives.

ZULU

There is a very similar state of affairs in Zulu although both here and in Sotho we will find major deviations from the Venda system. In our

study of the Zulu predicative we must select 16 forms for our selector system. The formative *-yo-* is excluded from this as it would introduce unnecessary considerations of the meaning of the term "tense". The selector system is here illustrated with the stem *-hamba* (walk). The remote past which Fortune rightly distinguishes by using a double *-aa-* (representing a long vowel in Zulu), is first treated as a primary form. This treatment leaves certain inadequacies and we shall then treat it in a different way.

- A1. *siyahamba* [...*ya*...-*a*] (we walk)
 2. *sihambile* [.../...-*ile*] (we walked—recently)
 3. *saahamba* [-*aa*...-*a*] (we walked—long ago)
 4. *sizohamba* [...*zo*...-*a*] (we shall walk)

- B1. (*si*)*be-sihamba* [... .../...-*a*] (we were walking)
 2. (*si*)*be-sihambile* [... .../...-*ile*] (we had walked)
 3. ...
 4. (*si*)*be-sizohamba* [... ...*zo*...-*a*] (we were going to walk.)

- C1. *saa(be)-sihamba* [... .../...-*a*] (we were walking)
 2. *saa(be)-sihambile* [... .../...-*ile*] (we had walked)
 3. ...
 4. *saa(be)-sizohamba* [... ...*zo*...-*a*] (we were going to walk)

- D1. *sizobe-sihamba* [... .../...-*a*] (we shall be walking)
 2. *sizobe-sihambile* [... .../...-*ile*] (we shall have walked)
 3. ...
 4. *sizobe-sizohamba* [... ...*zo*...-*a*] (we shall be going to walk)

This arrangement leaves certain potentialities of the forms incompletely explained. The absence of a form *ngibe-ngaahamba* is an indication that a straightforward alinement of the recent and remote, i.e. no. 2 and no. 3 forms, is unsatisfactory. It is probable that at one stage the Zulu distinction immediate-remote was incidental to the narrative

value of *saahamba*. This must not be confused with the consecutive *sahamba* (and then we went). A better arrangement would require the remote forms to exist as subordinate forms of the immediate past while also recognizing a system with a narrative reference.

- A1. *siyahamba*
 2. *sihambile*
 3. *sizohamba*

2a. *saahamba*

- B1. (*si*)*be-sihamba*
 2. (*si*)*be-sihambile*
 3. (*si*)*be-sizohamba*

- 1a. *saa(be)-sihamba*
 2a. *saa(be)-sihambile*
 3a. *saa(be)-sizohamba*

- C1. *sizobe-sihamba*
 2. *sizobe-sihambile*
 3. *sizobe-sizohamba*

N.B. In the compounded tenses the section shown in brackets is omitted from the usual form, e.g. *besihamba* (we were walking), *saasihamba* (we were walking—remote). When the concords are vowels the forms are *ubehamba* or *beyehamba* (he was walking) and *waayehamba* (he was walking—r.). The full form is never used but is useful in explaining the various contractions.

A careful consideration of the problems involved in the classification of the Zulu forms will show that we are dealing with several systems :

- (i) one of absolute temporal reference
- (ii) one of relative temporal reference
- (iii) one of narrative reference.

In these three systems we can only recognize what is commonly known as "tense" by the types of time adverbs they require. Thus although no. 2 tense is usually immediate it can also be used with adverbs such as "last year" while 2a is rarely used with "recent" adverbs, e.g. *uhambile izolo* (he went yesterday), *uhambile nyakenye* (he left last year). *Waahamba nyakenye* (he went last year) is incomplete since it is part of a narration. A further interesting point arising out of the consideration of these three systems is the fact that the no. 3 or future tenses lie outside the more basic contrast of past and present. This is true of both the form and the reference of these tenses.

Some examples of incompatible temporal reference constituting the stative conjugation of Zulu are given below:

(a) The formative *-sa-* (still)

A1. *ngisadla* [...*sa*...-*a*] (I am still eating)

B1. *bengisadla* [(*ngi*)*be* ...*sa*...-*a*] (I was still eating)

Bra. *ngaangisadla* [*ngaa*(*be*) ...*sa*...-*a*] (I was still eating)

C1. *ngizobe-ngisadla* [...*xo*/*be* ...*sa*...-*a*] (I will still be eating)

No other forms of the 16 exist in the system when *-sa-* is incorporated.

(b) The copulative

A1. *ulapha* [...(*lapha*)] (he is here)

B1. *ubelapha* [...*be* ...(*lapha*)] (he was here)

Bra. *waayelapha* [...-*aa*/*be* (*y*) ...(*lapha*)] (he was here—r.)

C1. *uzobeyelapha* [...*xo*/*be* (*y*)...(*lapha*)] (he will be here)

N.B. C1 must not be confused with the more common A3 *uzoba lapha* (he will be here, i.e. he is going to be here). The position of *-lapha* in this copulative conjugation can be taken up by the basic copulative form of any substantive or qualificative. In the noun the basic copulative form is characterized by a lowering of the tone on the initial syllable of the prefix. The prefix is disyllabic with two high tones. The lowering may be accompanied by *y-* before *-i-*, *ng-* before *-u-*, *-a-*, *-o-* and *l-* before class 5 monosyllabic long *ii-*, e.g. *yimithi* (it is trees), *ngumuntu* (it is a person), *lixhegu* (it is an old man), cp. *iixhegu*, cl. 5, *amaxhegu*. In adjectives the basic copulative has a monosyllabic prefix, e.g. *iixhegu elide* (a tall old man), but *lide* (he is tall).

(c) The stative stems

It has been pointed out that the stative suffix is invariable. It cannot be interchanged with a negative suffix *-i* or *-anga*. There are many of these stems in Zulu, e.g. *-mi* (stand), *-hleli* or *-hlexi* (sit), *-lele* (sleep), *-aphukile* (be broken), *-fudumele* (be warm), *-hambile* (be gone), *-khathele*

(be tired). These are comparable with *-ma* (stand up, rise), *-hlala* (sit down), *-lala* (go to sleep), *-aphuka* (break, intr.), *-fudumala* (get warm), *-hamba* (walk), *-khathala* (get tired).

The stative conjugation is shown in both positive and negative. This conjugation must be distinguished from that of the immediate past where *-ile* is interchangeable with *-anga* in the negative.

A2. *balambile* [.../...*ile*], neg. *abalambile* [*a*.../...*-ile*] (they cl. 2 are hungry)

B2. *bebelambile*, i.e. *babe-belambile* [.../...*-ile*] neg. *bebengalambile*, i.e. *babe-bengalambile* [.../...*nga*...*-ile*] (they were hungry)

2a. *baabelambile*, i.e. *baabe-belambile* [.../...*-ile*] neg. *baabengalambile* [.../...*nga*...*-ile*]

C2. *bazobe-belambile*, neg. *bazobe-bengalambile* (they will be hungry) ... not to be confused with *bazolamba* (they will get hungry).

In Zulu it is possible to list stative stems since they have a distinctive behaviour and never occur without *-ile* or a suffix mutually exclusive with *-ile*. However, it would be difficult to distinguish inchoative stems from non-inchoative by assigning to them the basic idea of "becoming . . .".

In spite of the existence of distinguishable stative stems in Zulu certain examples illustrate the fact that the fastidiousness of statives is shared by other stems which are not statives:

A1. *bayakhuluma* (they are speaking)

B1. *bebekhuluma* (they were speaking)

1a. *baabekhuluma* (they were speaking—r.)

A3. *bazokhuluma* (they will speak)

"Speaking" is a continuous process and in describing it we may sometimes refer to the total action, sometimes to the beginning, sometimes to the end. In the *-xo-* reference we are concerned with the beginning of the action, in the *-ile* we are concerned with the end of the action, while in the others we are concerned with the total action. This variable emphasis is closely connected with the existence of stative stems.

SOTHO

The Sotho system closely resembles the Venda in that it has no remote-recent distinction. There is a form which is termed "Past" in Sotho grammars and which is there distinguished from the "perfect" with *-ile*. The "Past" is usually described in two sections: the "long past" *uile areka*, and the "short past" *areka*. However, the second form corresponds to what we described as the consecutive in Zulu and has the meaning of "and then . . ." when it refers to an action which follows in time on another but is not causally associated with it in its meaning: *baile toropong bareka katiba baya libenkeleng leling bareka lieta* (they went (shopping) in town and (then) bought a hat (after which) they went to another shop and then bought shoes). *N.B.* The *baile* used here is not connected with the *-ile* of the "long past"; it is the "perfect" of *-ya* (go to . . .). The current orthography writes the Sotho sentence as: *ba ile toropong ba reka katiba ba ea lebenkeleng le leng ba reka lieta*.

On the other hand the compounded tense *uile areka* employs the auxiliary perfect *-ile* connected with the *-ya* described above. This auxiliary can be translated in many ways into English one of which is "...once", e.g. *uile aya toropong areka katiba* (he once went to town and bought a hat). This is very closely associated with the narrative use of the Zulu remote. Our attempts at translating this overburdened little auxiliary are further complicated by the use (in some S. S. dialects) of the *uile areka* in an emphatic sense, i.e. "he DID buy".

In S. Sotho there is no doubt whatever that this "Past" is subordinate—if it is at all comparable with the basic system of tenses. Thus, while Zulu has both immediate and remote forms of the basic tenses in the two compounded series, Sotho has nothing that could be compared with these.

The forms we place in our selector series are:

- A1. *uareka* [...a...-a] (he buys)
 2. *urekile* [.../...-ile] (he bought)
 3. *utlareka*[...tla...-a] (he will buy)

- B1. *une areka* [... .../...-a] (he was buying)
 2. *une arekile* [... .../...-ile] (he had bought)
 3. *une atlareka* [... ...tla...-a] (he was going to buy)
 C1. *utlabe areka* [... .../...-a] (he will be buying)
 2. *utlabe arekile* [... .../...-ile] (he will have b.)
 3. *utlabe atlareka* [... ...tla...-a] (he will be going to buy)

N.B. The concord of cl. 1 is normally *u-* but in the dependent or participial it is *a-*. This *a-* must not be confused with the low-toned *a-* in the consecutive concord which has an invariable *-a-*, viz. *uile areka* [... -a/... a] in the "long past".

The tense system in Sotho is relative; in other words, the time function of the Sotho system is incidental to its other duties. Since there is no absolute reference it is clear that there is no need for stative stems as such to be formally distinct. True stative stems as a regular feature of the language only arise out of the conflict of the two systems. For this reason the Sotho stative stems, like those of Venda, cannot be entirely lifted out of the basic selector system since there will be gaps for the no. 2 tenses. The alternative is therefore either to ignore a "stative" category altogether or to show two basic systems, viz. (i) the total (selector) system including the no. 2 tenses and (ii) a limited stative system consisting of no. 2 tenses only.

When we translate the Sotho "statives" in the way attempted below, then the urgency one feels to discover a class of "statives" in Sotho suddenly disappears: *-lula* (sit down) and *ulutsi* (he has seated himself), *-lapa* (get hungry) and *ulapile* (he has become hungry), *-ema* (get up, stand up, rise) and *uemi* (he has risen, etc.) The fact that he has seated himself means that he is sitting, the fact that he became hungry means that he is hungry, the fact that he got up means that he is standing. The state is incidental to the action having been completed.

On the other hand there is a fastidiousness of choice with these forms and, if we choose "time" as a criterion of our predicative, we must agree

that both *kialûla* (I am seating myself) and *kilûtsi* (I have seated myself) can refer to present time, to "now". In any case, the copulatives and other such series exercise an A1-B1-C1 fastidiousness, so that it is not strange to find an A2-B2-C2 system.

Here are some examples of some limited or stative series in Southern Sotho:

(a) The formative *-sa-* (still)

A1. *usasebetsa* [...*sa*/...-*a*] (he is still working)

B1. *une asasebetsa* [... ..*sa*/...-*a*] (he was still working)

C1. *utlabe asasebetsa* [... ..*sa*/...-*a*] (he will still be working)

The formative *-sa-* is incompatible with the time reference of any of the other tenses.

(b) The copulative

In the copulatives—excluding those of the 1st and 2nd person—there are two different ways of construction. These different ways depend on the grammatical category to which a word belongs. Thus all substantives, i.e. nouns and pronouns (as defined in *Bantu Linguistic Terminology* by C. M. Doke) use an invariable formative while all qualificatives use no such invariable but are preceded by the proper class concords. Thus the qualificative pronoun *emuhulu* with the prefix *emu-* class 1 and the stem *-hulu* (big) has the copulative *kiemuhulu* (he is a big one) where *ki-* is invariable, cp. the plural *kibabahulu* (they are big ones). To this we contrast *umuhulu* (he is big), *babahulu* (they are big).

The invariable *ki-* is interchangeable with the invariable *i-* which replaces it in the dependent or participial.

A1. *kimurena* [*ki*-...] (he is a chief), cp. *murena*, *marena*

B1. *ine ili murena* [... *i/li* ...] (he was a chief)

C1. *itlabe ili murena* [... *i/li* ...] (he will be a chief)

In order to illustrate the stable elements the following examples are given: *kimarena* (they are chiefs), *ine ili marena* (they were chiefs), *itlabe ili marena* (they will be chiefs), etc.

(c) The statives

Two suffixes are employed in Sotho, the one being *-tle* and its variants such as *-tse*, *-(t)ne*, the other: *-i* or *-yi*. Examples of *-tle*: *-reka* (buy) *-rekile*, *-bitsa* (call) *-bitsitse*, *-hana* (refuse) *-hanne*. Examples of *-yi* or *-i*: *-bona* (see) *-boni* or *-bon(y)i*, *-lûla* (sit down) *-lûtsi* cp. *-lûl-yi*.

A2. *ulûtsi* [.../...-*yi*] (he is sitting)

B2. *une alûtsi* [... ..-*yi*] (he was sitting)

C2. *utlabe alûtsi* [... ..-*yi*] (he will be sitting)

Sotho differs from Venda only in that it has the suffix *-tle* where Venda has the prefix *-o-*, e.g. Sotho *urekile* but Venda *orenga* both of which mean "he bought". In class 2: *barekile*, *vhorenga*, in class 5: *lirekile*, *lorenga*, etc.

KARANGA

A similar selection of tenses can be arranged in Karanga and probably in other languages of the Shona group. The selection is again based on the elimination of all the elements with a particular and distinguishable reference, e.g. *-sa-* (still), *-no-* (already), etc. in Venda. Fortune has e.g. eliminated the "progressives" and "exclusives". It might also prove profitable to eliminate such tenses or forms as those containing *-ri*, *-va*, etc. since these can later be treated as part of the basic system.

Fortune has omitted certain tenses from his analysis, e.g. *ndakanga ndadya* (I had eaten). Some of these tenses can be found in each of the Karanga or Zezuu grammars by Mrs. A. Louw, P. Marconness and P. O'Neil.

The tense-forming auxiliary of Shona, strangely, is not *-va* but *-nga*. When *-nga* is preceded by formatives containing *-e-* its final vowel must always be *-e-*, e.g. *-ne-ge*, *-xe-ge*. The auxiliary verb *-nga* must always be followed by the "main"

part of the predicate in the participial or dependent mood. In the present tense the participial or dependent is characterized by the formative *-ci-*

It seems that only auxiliary verb stems have the power to combine directly with the concord. In all other cases there is always some formative between the concord and the stem, e.g. *ndinoenda* (I walk), where *-no-* intervenes. But with the auxiliary verb *-ri-*: *ndiri kuenda* (I am (busy) walking).

The basic tense system in Karanga should include the *-ka-* or remote past tense. However, a good deal of further research in the other dialects of Shona will probably throw more light on the exact alinement of this tense with the others.

- A1. *ndinoenda* [...no...-a] (I walk)
 2. *ndaenda* [...a...-a] (I walked)
 3. *ndakaenda* [...a/ka... a] (I walked—r.)
 4. *ndicaenda* [...ca...-a] (I shall walk)
- B1. *ndanga ndicienda* [...-a/nga ...ci...-a] (I was walking)
 2. *ndanga ndaenda* (I had walked)
 3.
 4. *ndanga ndicaenda* (I was intending to walk)

N.B. I have found no reference to a tense *ndanga ndakaenda* in any of the grammars mentioned. My own notes are incomplete on this point, but cp. *ndanga ndakaneta* in Fortune's paper.

There is also a series which introduces *-ka-* viz.: *ndakanga ndaenda* which is remote. Marconness also lists such forms as *ndakanga ndakaenda*.

The future compounded tenses require *-neyge*: e.g. C1 *ndineyge ndicienda* (I shall be walking).

It is precisely this basic system which contains all the time references of the statives. It is the fact that stems like *-neta* belong to both a primary (selector) series and a stative series that should be emphasized in dealing with languages like Shona. However, these stems should be distinguished from the *-gere* stems.

Now *-neta* belongs to the following series:

- A2. *ndaneta* (I am tired)
 B2. *ndanga ndaneta* (I was tired)
 C2. *ndanga ndakaneta* (I was tired)
 D2. *ndineyge ndaneta* (I shall be tired)

At the same time this series is only an extract from the total selector system. This is not so with the stems *-gara* (seat oneself) and *-gere* (be seated): the first belongs to the total system and is equivalent in its time reference to a verb stem like *-enda*; the latter belongs only to the system:

- A1. *ndigere* [.../...e-e] (I am sitting)
 B1. *ndanga ndigere* (I was sitting) and *ndakanga ndigere*
 D1. *ndineyge ndigere* (I shall be sitting)

It is quite clear that *-neta* and *-gere* cannot adequately be treated together in Karanga.

Formatives also exhibit fastidiousness in Shona languages:

- A1. *ndicakaneta* (I am still tired)
 B1. *ndanga ndicakaneta* (I was still tired)
 D1. *ndineyge ndicakaneta* (I shall still be tired)

Normally *-neta* would have required the form *ndakaneta* (I am tired) but when the *-ca-* precedes it takes over the duties of *-neta*. Consequently *-ca-* has now become "inchoative", i.e. it is the time reference of *-ca-* which takes precedence over the time reference of *-neta*.

The possibilities of combination are imposing in the Shona languages. After the apparently clear-cut tense systems in the southern languages students have often been tempted to treat the Shona formatives as capable of incorporation according to the whim of the speaker. But this is not so. The tense system of Karanga follows more rigid patterns than those of the languages further south.

CONCLUSION

Two tense systems exist in Zulu: the one absolute, the other relative. Sotho and Venda have no absolute system. It is doubtful whether

there are "statives" of the same kind as found in Zulu in these two languages. The only basis on which we can recognize statives in these two languages is that statives have only three tenses instead of nine. These three tenses however form a subordinate system. Shona follows the same pattern but differs from Venda and Sotho in that it has a few (perhaps six) stems which are statives.

The stative verb stems, i.e. those occurring in stative tenses only form part of a much bigger system. Thus the copulatives, progressives, etc., all belong to the same system as the stative stems. The link between them all is the duration of the action they describe.

The three tenses in the relative tense system in Venda describe whether the action is in progress, whether it has ceased, or whether it is still intended. In such systems the future lies outside the contrast Action-in-progress . . . Action-perfected.

An attempt is made to analyse the compatibility of formatives with the total time reference of the predicative. The compatibility very often determines what tenses exist. On the other hand fastidiousness is described as the preference speakers of the languages have for some ideas

or tenses. This preference expresses itself in the frequency with which some forms are used and not others. The series A₁-B₁-A₃ is an example of fastidiousness.

The inference at which we must finally arrive is this:

1. The *reference* of a stem determines whether a word is to be included in the full series of forms or only in a limited one. The common reference of all verb stems we isolate in this way is however not determined by their "inchoativeness". It is suggested here that it is determined by the nature of their *time reference*. The total reference of any stem can be subdivided into a number of *sub-references*. One of these is the "time reference" which determines the inclusion of a stem in a certain series.
2. While the *reference* of a stem determines the inclusion of a stem in one series or another, it is yet by means of the series alone that we may recognize the "stativeness". It is the *series* with a limited number of forms which we term *stative*. For this reason the emphasis of any definition of the term must be on the *use* of a tense form.

THE DERIVATION OF THE NAME MASHONA

HARALD VON SICARD

SYNOPSIS

The name Shona for the inhabitants of "Mashonaland" is not a recent coinage, but is connected with the name Syuna or Sena, and various references in early writings are quoted in support of this. The people to whom the term, in various forms, originally applied are identified with the Lemba, who descended from two originally different groups, the Zambesi Sena and Fallashas, Black Jews from Abyssinia.

CHARLES BULLOCK's statement that the word Mashona is used *faute de mieux* and that it has no etymological explanation, being "simply one of those British bowdlerisations, which are borne so patiently by a long-suffering world" (*The Mashona*, p. 12) seems by now to have been generally accepted.

Posselt has expressed himself a little more cautiously, stating that "it is not clear what the terms 'Mashona' and 'Maswina' mean". He thought that the Rhodesian Africans did not regard them as complimentary, as "Maswina" may have been derived from *šina*, dirt (*Fact and Fiction*, p. 12).¹

It seems, however, worthwhile to scrutinize the word in the light of the material now available. First of all it can be definitely stated that the name Mashona is not as new, as some people seem inclined to believe. Barreto de Rezende, for instance, mentions in 1634 a "Kaffir king" named "Matshone", whose kingdom Bare was situated in the vicinity of Sena (McTHEAL, *Records*, II, p. 411).

More interesting is what in 1811 Lichtenstein writes about the "Macquini", "in the far north-east, behind the Muchuruhzi". He says: "It is from these the other Kaffirs get their metals, which are said to be mined at a big mountain, of which the one side supplies the iron and the other the copper." According to him, the Cwana regarded the "Macquini" as "the most far off and most important people. They received from them their hassagayes, knives, needles, ear- and arm-

rings . . . , mostly from the fourth or fifth hand" (LICHTENSTEIN, II, p. 531 seq.). The "Macquini" were living "30 to 40 days' journey to the north" (op. cit. p. 529), and from them had spread "the tale about the white people" (op. cit. p. 532).

This tribe cannot be any other than the "Maswina", Sena, Sayuna, Siuna, Syouna or Shona (cp. MARCONNES, *Nada*, 1932, p. 11). It is important to remember in this connection that the name Sena is said not to be Bantu (JUNOD, "The ethnological situation", p. 305) and that it seems to have been always difficult to render it appropriately. Thus, Ibn Said (1214-86) spelt it *Seyouna*, Dapper *Sajona* (cit. STORBECK, p. 46), and Jansson on his map 1639 *Sahona* (SCHILLING, p. 32). It is further significant that Avelot speaks of "le Sofala ou Syuna, pays du Ma-shona" ("Les grands mouvements", p. 79). Hartmann would seem to have been the first to identify Siuna with Sena (in *Edrisii Africa*, Göttingen: 1796, cit. STORBECK, p. 43).

All this could look like conjectures only, but it is supported by Campbell who in 1815 in his exceedingly interesting enumeration of tribes in the north-east and north of the Kalahari mentions the "Mashoona" (*Travels*, p. 408). Livingstone does not record them in a corresponding table (*Missionary Travels*, p. 202), but in another context he refers to Moffat's description of the

¹ Hall's suggestion in *Great Zimbabwe*, p. 80, that the word may be a corruption of *Mashuli*, *Mahuli* is untenable.

"Mashona Hills" (op. cit. p. 543), which are the same as the Matopo.

Robert Moffat himself refers since 1854 repeatedly to the "Bashonā or Mashona nation", which at that time still dared to rob Mzilikazi of his cattle and were strong enough to put one of his punitive "commandos" to flight (*The Matabele Journals*, I, p. 233 seq.).

Our modern explanation of the name has deprived us of the understanding of its historical and original background, and the way in which it has been used since the occupation has actually changed its original implication. We need, however, only to return to Moffat in order to understand that Mashona a hundred years ago designated a clearly defined tribe, though it must be conceded that his wording sometimes gives a first impulse towards the modern implication of the word.¹

Moffat mentions a couple of times a Shona doctor of Mzilikazi (*Journals* I, pp. 250 and 361), whose face reminded him of Melanchthon's and whose home had been in the neighbourhood of the Matopo Hills, i.e. the country of the god Mwari's central sanctuary, where the Lemba once played a prominent part (cp. VAN WARMELO: Ngoma lungundu, in *The Copper Miners*).

Moffat describes the Shona as "a superior people to the Matabele, . . . evidently a civilized and industrious people" (I, p. 250), "their dress is much more decent, than that of the Matabele" (I, p. 369). With regard to their country of origin he states: "They say their forefathers emigrated from the south-east beyond the land of the Baraputse" (ibid.), and this can hardly refer to anything else than the well-known Lemba return to Rhodesia under Chief Mposi from the south. This event, it is true, has sometimes been dated as late as 1898 (*Nada*, 1898), but according to Frobenius it took place about 1870 ("Die Waremba", p. 161), and small groups were re-immigrating all the time from the earlier part of the 19th century, as they had been in the south since about 1800 and had dwelt there together with the Shoko Mbire ("Venda") beyond the Rembedzi or Rem-

betu country (cp. VON SICARD, "Die Rembetu").

The decisive statement contained in Moffat's *The Matabele Journals* with regard to the Shona is, however, the following: "Some of their customs are peculiar from any tribe of which I have knowledge." Thus, for instance, the Shona doctor and his kinsmen refused to eat the Tebele people's meat, "because it is not slaughtered by their own hands" (*Journals*, I, p. 369, cp. 370), and when once Mzilikazi had given the doctor a goat, "he instantly ran a spear into it behind the shoulder and immediately cut the throat, and at the same time laying the windpipe open lengthwise." This way of killing is, of course, nothing else than the often described Lemba custom of ritual slaughter (STAYT, p. 40 seq., OTHENIUS, p. 70 seq., FROBENIUS, p. 165 seq., JUNOD, p. 282). Nor is there any historical evidence of other groups or tribes having migrated at the time in question from the Northern Transvaal to the Matopo, except the Lemba, and again, it is just the Lemba hereditary high priests who, owing to their superior intelligence, used to be attached by some chiefs to their courts (THOMPSON, p. 77).

All this makes it very probable that the original Shona or Sena in one way or the other have to be connected with the Lemba. Some further historical evidence makes a still stronger case of our assertion. As it is, Moffat mentions three "Shona" chiefs, viz. Sepamopamo, and Motelemba, which "is the name of the next in power. There also appears to be another chief named Jelliman, though some of them professed not to know him by that name . . ." (I, p. 369).

None of these names occurs among the ancestors of the ruling Moyo Rozwi and Shoko Mbire tribes. To be sure, Mauch says that the last "Balosse Chief Sebamubamu (gun)" in 1866 succumbed to two years' efforts of the Tebele (MAUCH, p. 44), but he received this information at Great Zimbabwe, where there were no longer any Rozwi, when he reached it. Moreover, the Zimbabwe sacrifices described by him, remind one strongly of the Israelitic sacrifices prescribed in Levit. 16, v. 5, 9, 21 seq. and 6. I am, therefore,

¹ *Journals*, I, p. 240 seq. Cp. however, the Lemba Chief Mposi's claim in 1892 to be the Lord of all

Karanga chiefs in the Belingwe district, *Berliner Missions-Berichte*, 1893, p. 85.

inclined to believe that his high priest, too, was a Lemba,—and Mauch received his information about Sepamupamu from the high priest's son.

According to Wilkerson, Mzilikazi killed "Mambo Usipamubamu's son", while his grandson was caught on the flight, but afterwards "was sent back beyond the Sabi with cattle and there acted as an Induna or petty chief" (WILKERSON I, p. 69). This settlement probably refers to the small Lemba group beyond the Sabi.¹

The second chief mentioned by Moffat, Motelemba, is nowhere else met with, unless the presumably hereditary name of Chief Mulemba (VAN WARMELO, p. 63 seq., 173 seq.) is identical with it. Etymologically it seems to allude to the Lemba.

The last name, "Jelliman" is another way of spelling "Chillymane, the chief of the Mashona" (MOFFAT, II, p. 59), who was still alive in 1857. It is evidently to this person or to an ancestor with the same name that we have to retrace Posselt's Seremane, around whom centres the Lemba ancestor worship (POSSELT, p. 9).

Thus, Moffat's three "Shona" chiefs can, with a great amount of certainty, be regarded as Lemba, and the close connection between them and Mzilikazi on the one hand and the Lemba and the Mwari cult in the Matopo Hills on the other, would partly explain, why the Tebele rulers recognized the Mwari or Mlimo cult, though one has to remember that Mwari-Mlimo would not have been altogether unknown to the Tebele in the south either. This Lemba connection also throws some new light on the friendly relations between Lobengula and Mposi, as they appear in the Rev. C. Knothe's Journal of 1888, written during his visit to Southern Rhodesia.

If we have succeeded in demonstrating that the original Shona were Sena-Lemba, then it appears only natural that Lichtenstein was told that the "other Kaffirs" got their metals and metal instruments from the "Macquini", nor is it

impossible that the old name Musina for Messina in the Northern Transvaal has the same root as Ma-cquini, Sena and Shona.

From the above one could be lead to conclude that up to about a hundred years ago the names Shona and Lemba were synonymous. The name Lemba seems, however, to have been unknown in the western parts of S. Rhodesia, say in the Matopo-Mzingwane region, and in the north, on the Zambesi. On the other hand, there is no instance on record of Mposi's Lemba in Belingwe having been called Shona, and if the name Lemba occurs in the traditions about the sacred drum Ngoma-lungundu, one has to remember that their forerunners there had been the "Musina" people (VAN WARMELO, p. 5) and the occurrence of the Lemba name is explained by the fact that the ruling Mbire migrated beyond the Limpopo via Mposi's Lemba country around the Belingwe and Vhuhwa Hills (VAN WARMELO, p. 63 seq.).

At any event, in Belingwe people make a clear distinction between the Lemba and the Sena, though one can hear it repeatedly stated that the Lemba originally came from Sena (cp. for instance OTHENIUS, p. 68, FROBENIUS, p. 161). Nevertheless, I was told in 1948 by blind Mangoni Mhofu, an old Hera man of Chief Nyashanu's people,² residing in the Belingwe Reserve, that the Sena once were living with Chief Cihunduru, a "Rozwi" ruler well remembered in Belingwe, at Kapango, from where one goes to Nyanja, a river which does not flow. Their chief was Kapangu Zhou,—Zhou, the Elephant, being the totem of the tribe. He and Cihunduru lived with his children at Sena, but then Cihunduru took them, in order that they might help him to build those stone walls, as he himself did not know how to build them.³ The Sena were not his slaves, they were friends and on good terms. They built, for instance, the Munhungi walls, i.e. the ruins on Camunhungu Hill, near the Masase Mission in

¹ It may be that Th. Baines' Sebombom (*Goldfields Diaries*, London: 1946, passim.) also has to be connected with our Sepamupamu, but this is of no account for our investigation.

² The Hera are related to the Shoko Mbire (BULLOCK, p. 34) as well as to the Lemba (BLAKE THOMSON, 1938, February, p. 20). The name of their first ancestor Mberu (TABERER, p. 326) is very common among the Abyssinian Falashas, where it takes

the form of Beru (RATHJENS, p. 71). ³ "Ua Sena vanga vagere na Cihunduru. Kapango ndipo pava Sena. Uano yera Zhou. Kana munhu acibva Kapango, unoinda Nyanja. Ndirwo rwizi, haruyerer, runoita segungwa, panofamba zikepe. She wava Sena Kapangu Zhou. Uaiva vose na Cihunduru kuna vana vake Sena. Cihunduru wakavatora, kuti vuyai, mundivakire shingo idzodzi, iye asingazivi kuvaka, acibva Mambo".

Belingwe.¹ The Sena were building all the time, trimming the stones.²

Nor is this the only instance, where the Sena are said to have built stone walls in the south. In 1947 Mr. K. R. Robinson of the Bulawayo Museum was told at Chief Cabeda's on the Lower Mzingwane River that the Mgurumbe ruins, a few miles to the north on the river "were said to have been occupied by Masena" (oral information 28.7.1947). When I visited the site in May 1949, I found the ruins to be the most extensive I have so far seen in the Beitbridge area. In their construction, however, they do not in any way differ from other Rhodesian stone walls of the *Zimbabwe* type.

Finally, old Mataka Moyo, some miles south of Cabeda, told me in 1948 that he had heard that formerly there had been two tribes in the north, the Rozwi and the Sena.

Without going into detail, I should like to state that most probably our present Lemba are the descendants of two originally different groups: the numerically stronger Zambesi Sena, who were influenced by Mohammedanism, and a much smaller group of Abyssinian black Jews or Fallashas, who had brought with them to the south Old Testament traditions as well as rituals.³

One more observation might be added. Mwari, the high god, is once called "the Ancestor God of the Vhasenzi and Vhakalanga", (VAN WARMELO, p. 10. 111), "Vhasenzi" being the name bestowed by the Lemba on all "unclean", i.e. uncircumcised tribes,⁴ but who are in this context the "Karanga", —if not exactly the "Lemba"? The word "Karanga" has been explained in many different ways (cp. VON SICARD, "Drei grundlegende",

p. 571 seq.), but what interests us here is that it has been used by the Lemba-Sena as their own designation. Wangemann, too, states that in the Southern Transvaal they called themselves "Banyai-Bakechalaka" (REISEJAHR, p. 436 seq.), and Wissmann informs us that on the Upper Congo the Arabs were called "Bakalaka" (*Berliner Miss. Berichte*, 1889, p. 336). Our Sena-Karanga were, then, indeed "the people of the sun" (*Sabina*, p. 82) or "of the north" JUNOD, *The Life of a South African Tribe*, I, p. 18, note). They have from a very early date been the most conspicuous people on the Zambezi. Later they entertained friendly relations with the ruling Hamitic Shoko Mbire and extended their sway to the south, far beyond the Limpopo, whereby their name became pronounced both Sena and Shona.

In order to avoid any misunderstanding I must add that these Sena-Shona people were not even from the beginning pure Arab or a mixture only of Arab and Bantu. We have pointed out before that Sena is not a Bantu name. Nor would it appear to be Arab, as the Arab writers render it in rather different ways. Sena had been a commercial centre for Indians as well as Persians⁵ and Arabs alike, nor should we overlook the Chinese influence there⁶. The Indian name for China is T'shina. It was probably derived from the Ts'in dynasty (221-207 B.C.).

Thus, we arrive at the following conclusions. The name Shona was originally identical with Syuna-Sena and designated the Oriental traders on the Zambesi and their half-caste light-skinned ("white") descendants. Later on, probably in the 15th century, they made friends with the Hamitic Mbire, the founders of the Monomotapa Kingdom.

¹ Cp. for photographs, *Nada*, 1942, p. 82, and *Proc. Rhod. Sc. Ass.*, vol. V (1905), Pl. X-XII, where the ruins are called Umukwane; and for a description HALL and NEAL, p. 227-32.

² "Ua Sena vakavaka, vaciveza, vaciveza, vaciveza, Mambo Mutinhima Moyo akasika, Cihunduru woti 'Ah', wotiza."

³ I have arrived at the Falasha conclusion quite independently, but I was greatly encouraged when finding that Thompson before me had called attention to this relation (THOMPSON, p. 85). See for details about the Lemba-Falasha: *Eine ostafrikanische Bundeslade*, which I hope shortly to publish.

⁴ Cp. KNOTHE, *Basehnsi, Unbeschnittene*, 1888; TORREND, p. 42; JUNOD, "Balemba", p. 285.

⁵ Cp. NAZAROFF, p. 776; the Shirazi on the East Coast; and Senna in the Persian Kurdistan.

⁶ Cp. Alberuni, cit. FERRAND, *Journal Asiatique*, 1907, p. 552; "Edrist", cit. FERRAND, *Le K'ouen-Louen*, p. 221, 233-38; Abd al-Latif, cit. FERRAND, *Relations*, p. 331, note; Duyvendak; FRIPP, C. E., "Chinese mediaeval Trade in Africa", *Nada*, 1941, p. 18; v. HORNOSTEL, *Nature*, vol. 136, no. 3247 (1935), p. 4; E. L. SCHWARZ, "The Chinese connection with Africa", *Journ. Royal Asiat. Soc. of Bengal*, August 1939. Cp. also for the connection China-Queen of Saba, A. FORKE, "Mu Wang und die Königin von Saba", *Mitt. des Seminars f. orient. Sprachen*, Jahrg. VII, Berlin: 1904, p. 117-72.

At about that time the names Sena and Karanga became almost synonymous. Some Mbire and Sena groups migrated together further to the south, to a country which had earlier occasionally been visited by Sena trading expeditions. Some groups of fugitive Abyssinian Falashas joined the Sena on the Zambesi and were more or less incorporated with them. They are responsible for Jewish customs and rituals and for some distorted Old Testament traditions which can be found in Rhodesia, but also for those traits in the picture of the high god Mwari, which are reminiscent of Jahwe. The Falasha element has

been most purely retained by Chief Mposi's Lemba, though it is no longer possible to keep the Sena and Lemba strictly apart.—In the south the name Shona was soon applied indiscriminately to the whole group of Sena-Mbire-Lemba to distinguish them from earlier Bantu immigrants, but in connection with the Nguni conquest the name lost its former glory and by the time of the British occupation it was even considered as degrading. The British people, finally, used it to designate all the African tribes in Southern Rhodesia.

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THE KISRA LEGEND

A. B. MATHEWS, O.B.E.

SYNOPSIS

The Kisra legend is common in the Northern Provinces of Nigeria. It tells of a magician king who came from the East (Arabia?). The name may be identified with that of the Persian dynasty "Chosroes", or perhaps with either an Egyptian or a Hamitic (Hausa) root, in both cases signifying "royal". At all events, there was a great migration in the seventh century A.D. from the Sudan to the west, of which the influence extended to Yorubaland in the south-west of Nigeria, of so-called Kororafa. These may have been Norbatai or Meroitic peoples of some sort (Zaghawa). Relics of Kisra exist at Karissen, with which place is especially associated the story of a "golden cross of Kisra", Wukari, and Bussa. They are described in this article. They consist of drums, swords, and spears, which are said to have been left at these various places by Kisra.

THE FOLLOWING NOTES on the Kisra legend or tradition are based upon my own researches in Nigeria in 1926; upon C. K. MEEK'S *Northern Nigeria* (Oxford: 1925); H. HERMON-HODGES' *Gazetteer of the Ilorin Province* (London: 1929); H. R. PALMER'S *Sudanese Memoirs* (Lagos: 1928); and A. J. BUTLER'S *The Arab Conquest of Egypt* (Oxford: 1902); and fundamentally upon the work and notes of Dr. M. D. W. Jeffrey's, Senior Lecturer in Anthropology in the University of the Witwatersrand. It was at Dr. Jeffrey's suggestion that I undertook the preparation of this article. It embodies some new material hitherto unpublished, based upon information obtained in the field which, after the passing of a whole generation, may now be lost.

In the first place, I should make it clear that I am profoundly sceptical of arguments based upon "etymology", and unsupported by any more cogent evidence. Ingeniously blended with metathesis and inductive reasoning to fit the premises which their author essays to prove, such arguments would make linguistics a criterion of ethnological affinity, instead of mere evidence of culture contact. They have been over-worked in the past, and in the present article I shall try to give them the credit they deserve, but no more.

The Kisra legend or tradition is common in

the Northern Provinces of Nigeria from Wukari on the Benue River to Illo and Bussa on the Niger. It tells of a magician king of that name who was driven out of Arabia by the Prophet and who founded a series of pagan states in the Western Sudan. It has been stated that the Jukun of Wukari have no knowledge of the Kisra tradition. But this is not so. The Aku Oka (the Priest-King, or rather, Divine King, of the Jukun) keeps a sword and a spear which are said to have been left at Wukari by Kisra. The sword is called *butren*, "the sword of olden time", and the spear is called *ishigh*, which is not the usual word for a spear in Jukun and is applied to this spear alone. I shall return to this later.

The Jukun say that they came from the East (Egypt or Mecca) and in Bornu and Katsina both Kororafa and Wukari (its off-shoot) are said to have been founded by descendants of Kisra. The Kakau of Songhai assert that about A.D. 600 there was a great migration from east to west across the Sudan called the Kisra Migration. The "Kisra" are made out to be Persians who fought against Rum (the Byzantines) and were driven west, entering Nigeria by way of Lake Chad.

There is considerable support for the view that Kisra may be identified with Chosroes.

Meek points out the connexion and at p. 72 of *Northern Nigeria* says that Kisra is the name by which the Sassanid kings of Persia were known, variants being Khusru, Khosru, or Khusrau, and the Hellenized "Chosroes". Chosroes was king of Persia in the latter part of the sixth and the early years of the seventh century A.D. and after being driven out of his kindgom by a usurper, Bahram, he sought the help of the Romans. With it he was re-established on the throne, and when the Emperor Maurice who had helped him was in turn expelled and put to death by a usurper, Chosroes made war on Rome and over-ran Armenia, Syria and Asia Minor. Jerusalem fell to him in May, 615. Subsequently, he "took all Egypt and Alexandria and Libya up to Ethiopia", and the Persian armies occupied the country for ten or twelve years. The Emperor Heraclius staged a come-back, and by 628 Rome had regained what she had lost and Chosroes was caught and put to death.

There are, however, many difficulties in identifying Kisra with Chosroes. Of them, the primary one is that Chosroes led no migration and that the migration from Arabia was caused by Chosroes, not led by him. It was a migration of Abyssinians from Yamen, and there was no migration of Beduin tribes until the conquest of Egypt and the advance of Islam along the north of the African continent in 639, A.D.

There are stories of relationship between Kisra and Mahomet, but these may be later accretions added by peoples who inherited the Kisra legend and wished to give it the *cachet* which Islam has won for itself even among pagans in the Western Sudan. As for the resemblance between the names of Kisra and Chosroes, there may in this be no more than the accidental resemblance of a tri-consonantal word. If the Persian word is KH-SR- it does not necessarily follow that the Kisra of Nigerian legend is the same. And if we assume that they are not the same, many difficulties in reconciling the two stories disappear.

As an alternative, Meek suggests that Kisra is a variant of the Hausa *sarki* or *seraki*, which may be the equivalent of Se Ra, son of Ra, a royal title in ancient Egypt. In this case, the *-ki* would

be a suffix. With metathesis, *seraki* readily becomes *kisra*. To this enticing hypothesis, which is at least as likely as the Chosroes one, I may add that in the Bussa language *ki-shira* means "black king" (*ki*=king, *shira*=black). It is tempting to connect this with the black bull of Mithraism which the Persians introduced into Egypt. (Incidentally, *ki* has nothing to do with the Anglo-Saxon "king"; but there is a field for speculation in the fact that Kisra is nearly as like "Caesar" as "Chosroes").

On the other hand, the sacrifice of a black bull is not uncommon. It is found for instance among the Swazi, the Bavenda, and other African tribes; while the Egyptian Apis bull may or may not be a relic of Mithraism. As to the *ki* root, the title of the kings of Illo, Bussa, and Kaiana—all "Kisra" towns in the north-west of Nigeria—is *kibe*, while in Takum, south of Wukari but a Jukun town, I believe that *akite* means "ancestral spirit".

It appears therefore that there was a great migration in the seventh century A.D. from east to west across the Sudan of the peoples generally called Kororafa. Palmer has suggested that the name of Kisra has been equated to Kaisera (Chosroes), a definite historical personality who had conquered Egypt and much of what we now know as the Middle East; and that this led to the association of the Persians with Kisra.

Mallam Sherif, Alkalin Argungu, in 1922 gave the line of migration as roughly Omdurman-Jebel Kwon (Kordofan)-Wadai. This is probably fairly correct. The first halting place seems to have been Maga (i.e. the Fittri region) and then the Balda-Fis region west of the Shari river. From there the migration came down to the middle Gongola.

Arrived in what is now the Northern Province of Nigeria this account tells of the migration by way of Marua—Yola—and thence down the river Benue, dividing into two branches. One of them may be traced to Wukari, Idah, and eventually to what is now Yorubaland. The other proceeded by way of Keana, Keffi, Zaria, and thence, after a pause which is stated to have been of 300 years, to the west again, to Karissen, Bussa and Illo.

Palmer has suggested that the migrations were either Norbatai who had not long before been crushed by the Blemmyes, or Meroitic peoples of some kind. In his introduction to Meek's *Northern Nigeria* he says that two main streams of Zaghawi migration extending over the period A.D. 500-1000 and coming ultimately from Yam (the name by which the ancient Egyptians knew a part of Nubia) are the real basis of the legends of Sudanese Hamitic invasions such as those associated with Kisra and the Jukun kings. Incidentally, the Yoruba connexion was maintained between Illo and the Alake of Abeokuta at least until 25 years ago.

To sum up. There is no actual evidence of a "Persian" migration. Chosroes drove Abyssinian Christians out of the Yemen, but they merely returned to Abyssinia. The migration from east to west across the Sudan was probably only accidentally similar in some of its details to the history of the Persian conquest of Egypt and the neighbouring countries. And the association with the Prophet may be no more than that Mahomet was beginning the spread of Islam at about the same time; coupled with the *cachet* which Islam has gained among even the pagans of the Western Sudan.

There is a translation of Mallam Sherif's note, to which I referred above, in Palmer's *Sudanese Memoirs* (p. 61). The note is compiled from the Mallam's notes of a History of the Yorubas which he saw in the house of the Zanua of Wukari in c. 1880. I have never found any trace of this document.

Finally, before leaving the traditional aspect of Kisra, I would add a word on the name *Asara*. The Yoruba say that Lamerudu (=Nimrod, a name which constantly appears as one of the ancestors of the ruling dynasty in the Kisra towns, and a relative of Kisra) was a king of Mecca who tried to convert Arabia from Mahomedanism to paganism, and that he was assisted by his priest son, Asara. Now *Nasara* is the usual name for a European in the Sudan and it is the Hausa word. It is derived from "Nazarene" (or *Anasara*). Asara is frequently mentioned in the stories of Kisra as being the name of one of his

companions or relatives. But there is no justification for identifying Kisra with Christ on the basis of the *Nasara* association. It is much more probably a corruption of the Hausa word *zarumi*, meaning a "man of war" or "captain". This at least is what the Bussa told me in 1926. They say that Bussa was founded by Asara, younger brother of Azizi, ancestor of the Prophet, who was one of Kisra's captains.

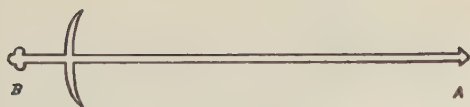
The identification of Kisra with Christ, for which Sir Harry Johnston was responsible, seems indefensible on grounds of internal evidence alone. But it is possible that the legend of the Gold Cross of Karissen may have helped to support it. I could find no trace of any such thing, nor of any evidence of a cross in the mythology and tradition of the "Kisra" peoples in north-west Nigeria.

RELICS OF KISRA

Karissen

In this Kisra town, in the Achifawa country, are kept the sword and spears of Kisra. The cross-like guard of the former under its wrappings of cloth seems to be the nearest thing to a cross known to the Achifawa. These weapons are hidden in the house of the *Womo*, or chief. They are kept in a porch hung up close to the roof, the whole bundle being tightly bound up with grass rope. They are not seen by anyone except at the installation of the new *Womo*, and I believe that no European has ever seen them. I have only seen them in their wrappings. The sword is wrapped in narrow strips of white native cloth, like Kano cloth. I was told that it was never removed, but as I was also told that a new wrapping was put on whenever a new *Womo* was installed, I do not believe this. The cloth was not too thick for me to get a good idea of the shape of the sword when it was taken down for me to handle.

The sword is some 36 inches long over all, and about 1½ inches wide in the blade. It is single-handed, and as far as I could judge under the wrappings it is shaped thus:



Wukari (Yukun)

Here the Aku Oka (Divine King) keeps a sword and spear which were left by Kisra. I have referred to them above. The spear is brought out to the door of the house by the Aku when a son or daughter is borne to him. It is shown to all the assembled people and then put away again. The spear is said to be of iron and about five feet long, and to be bifurcated. At each tip of the fork are what seem, to judge by the description, to be small spikes. There is an iron ring on the shaft. The sword is only brought out at the *Puje* festival when it is held by a woman *Mutsi*, widow of the late Aku, who invokes the deity for rain if it is late. It is also her duty to sow the first seed.

Bussa

Two drums of Kisra are kept by the *kibe* (chief). They are about three feet in diameter and a foot deep, made of some white metal with much-perished skin heads. They are dome-shaped, rather like the former Mounted Infantry drums.

At *A* there is a slight bulge in the cloth wrapping such as the tip of a sheath would make. But I was informed that there was no sheath. On the other hand, the hilt seems loose on the blade and feels as easy as a loose-sheathed sword would be. When I saw it the then Womo had only been in office a year and under the conditions in which the sword was kept I do not think that it would have rusted into a sheath if indeed it is inside one. On the other hand, the sword seemed well-balanced even under the wrappings. If therefore there is a sheath it must fit tightly. Perhaps the hilt is loose on the blade. The hilt seems to be of iron covered with leather and I believe that the pommel *B* may be of gold. The crescent-shaped guard can only be detected by actual handling, and seems cruciform under the wrappings.

Five spears are tied up with the sword. Four are intact, and one has a broken shaft. They are socketed, with blades 12-18 inches long.

NOTES OF THE QUARTER

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The journal of *African Studies* by thus publishing in its pages the relevant sections of this declaration thereby subscribes to it. This co-operation will enable scientists to obtain a copy of a specified paper without having to apply to publishers for specific permission.

* * *

East African Research. The East African Institute of Social Research which has been projected since 1948 has now been established at Makerere College Uganda under the Directorship of Dr. Audrey Richards. Work will be carried out in Kenya, Uganda, Tanganyika and Zanzibar and will include sociological, linguistic, economic, legal and psychological studies.

The Institute will be closely associated with Makerere College and will report annually to the Council of that College as well as to the Colonial Social Science Research Council of the Colonial Office. It has, however, its own staff, who will not be engaged on teaching duties, and an independent programme of research.

The appointment of five anthropologists to the

staff of the Institute has been made or approved. One urban sociologist has been appointed and a second post in this field is contemplated. A linguistic post has been advertised and the appointment of a senior economist, a psychologist and a legal expert are under discussion.

The following projects of research are contemplated in the near future.

1. A social survey of Jinja to be started at the end of June, 1950.

2. Anthropological studies in Buganda, Busoga and Bunyankole, as well as tribal studies in the Lake Province of Tanganyika and in West Kenya which are under discussion. Co-operation with anthropologists at present studying the Alur, the Lugbara, the Acholi, the Turkana and the Ambo, and with research workers shortly going to do studies amongst the Kikuyu and the Teita, has been arranged.

3. It is hoped that Dr. A. N. Tucker of the School of Oriental and African Studies will

initiate linguistic studies at the Institute and will himself carry out a survey of some of the Nilo-Hamitic languages.

The Institute is very anxious to accumulate information on the people of East Africa both in the form of published work and unpublished manuscripts. The material that will be useful includes historical accounts of tribal movements; data on social structure, clan organization, village organization, the family, marriage and age grades, etc.; accounts of local cases or court procedure; data on modern economic conditions; material on urban problems.

The Institute will also welcome offers of help on research problems from members of the Government Service or missionaries who have opportunities for making observations.

All inquiries should be addressed to the Director, East African Institute of Social Research, Makerere College, P.O. Box 262, Kampala, Uganda.

CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS NUMBER

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BOOKS IN REVIEW

Islam in the Sudan. J. S. TRIMMINGHAM. (Oxford University Press: 1949.) 280 pp., 21/- net.

This is a most informative account with a wealth of detail by one who has a thorough grip of his subject. Though much of it is so detailed that it can only be grasped and used by the specialist, there is much to profit the lay reader and to open his eyes to conditions governing the religious state of the many tribes in the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan.

In the early chapters of the book the author deals with the distribution and general description of the varied peoples inhabiting the land, paying particular attention to those that are islamized or coming under the influence of Islam. Special study is made of the Nuba. Most valuable is the historical outline covering the Christian kingdoms of Nobatia, Makuria and Alodia, the first being "Nubian". Then he deals with the expansion of the Arab tribes and the arabization of the Sudanese. Islam is shown to be not so much a creed as a unified social system. Influences in the spread of Islam in Africa are the fact that Muslims place extreme emphasis on the externals of religion and make no important ethical demands. "They have a unified and attainable religious-social code of behaviour. They do not live, as Christians do, in a state of tension, feeling that their lives fall short of their religious standard."

Orthodox Islam is discussed in Chapter 4, and the many concessions made to the African peoples in order to incorporate them with their social customs, and their many animistic beliefs and practices. Islam in the Sudan is characterized by the emphasis put upon the saints. "So bound up are the saints with the religious life of Islam in the Sudan that to think of Allah without his intermediaries is impossible." Saint-worship seems to be the hall-mark of Islam in the Sudan. The *Wali*, the "holy" man who can perform miracles, is the centre of religion, and the tombs of the saints are of more importance than the mosques. A great part of this book is devoted to the beliefs and

practices of this popular Islam, and to the multifarious religious dervish orders, transmitting Sufism and wielding much influence in the communities.

The author states that the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, like the French Sudan, is an actual battleground between Islam and Animism. "Islam has gained in some regions, repressed in others." He shows how Islam has progressed among the Funj-Nuba tribes, but that it has not the protective and social advantages that would attract the Nilotic peoples; these latter, the Dinka, the Shilluk and the Nuer, have interposed as a barrier preventing the southward expansion of Islam. Historically the great Mahdist movement was the strongest single force in the spread of Islam in the Sudan, and with the breaking up of that power, advance has been greatly slowed down. The social equality which Islam ensures to the Africans gives its appeal a force lacking in Christianity under European administration.

One would like to have had some information on the effect of modern Christian missionary effort in these regions; the author has confined himself to Islam and only briefly touched on education and economics. For the lay reader a glossary explaining the Arabic terms so frequently used, and a guide to their pronunciation would have been a great advantage. These are only suggestions. The book is a splendid exposition.

C. M. D.

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Some Problems of Anthropological Research in Kenya Colony. I. SCHAPER. Memorandum XXII of the International African Institute. (Oxford University Press: 1949.) 2/6.

This report was somewhat harshly reviewed in the *Economist* of 17 September 1949.

Professor Schaper makes it clear in the

anthropological study of a people, how necessary it is for such studies to be carried out by a team. He points out that the report is written from the angle of the social anthropologist.

The first fourteen pages are devoted to a useful summary of, and a commentary on, the known literature dealing with the natives of Kenya. The conclusion is that no satisfactory information comparable with monographs written to-day by social anthropologists exist on any of these tribes. He then discusses the priority in the needs of studying the various tribes. Scientifically, the aboriginal hunters, the Dorobo have a prior claim but administratively other groups have preference. He discusses the pros and cons and considers that a concentrated study of the coastal Bantu perhaps has prior claim: he then discusses the priorities of other tribes and makes out a good case for his point of view.

On the theoretical side Kenya offers an unparalleled field for study because, apart from the effect of civilization on barbaric cultures, there is the study of the inter-actions between very different barbaric cultures themselves: that of nomad pastoralists on agriculturists; of state organized society on stateless ones.

Professor Schapera outlines clearly the problems that face the theoretical anthropologist and those that face the administration—problems that can only be tackled after accurate information is obtained.

He also refers to the role he considers that the anthropologist should fill *vis-à-vis* the government but governments have laid down what is to be the role of the anthropologist.

Professor Schapera's recommendation about a liaison officer collating under separate headings all that is known locally upon such subjects as land tenure, law, etc., is admirable. It was tried out in Nigeria but for no known reason the post was abolished.

Another item that would have helped governments in the past to acquire some information on subjects on which nothing exists at present is that each year one subject and one only should be made a study by each district officer and his report then sent in.

If each district officer had, say in the year 1922, been called on to report on land tenure in his district and a collating officer appointed at the Central Secretariat to collate the mass of information sent in and made it available to all officers, the task of the administrator and of the anthropologist would be eased so very much.

The bibliography at the end is a useful compilation.

M. D. W. JEFFREYS.

* * *

Report of the Native Affairs Commission, 1946-47. (Government Printer, Pretoria: 1949.) 6/6.

Reading between the discreet lines of this Report, one finds a good deal of valuable information. Most important are the disclosures in regard to the purchase of more land for Native occupation. Land is bought by the South African Native Trust on the recommendation of the Native Affairs Commission. Neither body is, however, armed with legal powers to compel Europeans to sell their land, even at high prices, when it falls within areas scheduled as suitable for Natives. As a result, in two of the four provinces, the Cape and Natal, the amount of land available for purchase by the Trust is not nearly enough to reach the quota allotted under the Act of 1936. The position in the Cape Province is described as "extremely difficult". The worst congestion is in the Ciskei and the Transkei; but the land open to purchase lies far away in the north-western areas where ethnographic and agricultural circumstances are quite different, thus ruling out any large-scale transfer of population. The situation in Natal is equally bad, if not worse. The Trust has encountered such opposition from Europeans that it has acquired barely ten per cent of the land allotted for the province. In present circumstances the likelihood of redeeming the promises made to the Natives in 1913 and 1936 remains remote.

J. L.

Juta's First Zulu Manual. I. Fox. (Juta and Co., Cape Town, Johannesburg: undated, 1950.) 116 pp., 7s. 6d.

A Zulu Manual for Beginners. D. McK. MALCOLM. (Longmans, Green and Co., Cape Town: 1949.) vi+169 pp., 8s. 6d.

Although a good scientific exposition of Zulu is provided by Doke's *Text-book of Zulu Grammar*, the need has long been felt for an up-to-date manual for use by non-Zulu-speakers. It is no doubt in response to this need that these two new publications appeared almost simultaneously at the beginning of this year.

Both books are apparently intended for use by beginners, that is, persons having no previous knowledge of Zulu. The more fortunate of these will have the assistance of a teacher who will be able to supplement the information set out in the books by further explanation and examples, but many will not. The latter at least are due for much puzzlement, frustration and annoyance if they hope to acquire a knowledge of Zulu from either of these books, for both authors tend to presuppose that their readers have a knowledge of phonetic and Bantu linguistic terminology. Few, if any, of the many undefined and unexplained technical terms *Radical*, *Ejective*, *Implosive*, *Bilabial*, *Prepalatal*, etc., will have any significance for the average beginner. Their descriptions of the vowels are not very happy, for the pure *e* and *o* of Zulu cannot be equated with the (usually) diphthongal *ay* of English *way*, and the *o* of *old*, although similar to the first parts of those diphthongs. We can detect no difference between the vowels of English *bet* and *egg*, given by Fox on page 9 as approximate equivalents for Zulu *e* and *ɛ* respectively, and his description of Zulu *a* as being like "*u* in *sun* with lips rounded" is completely off the mark—this would produce the vowel *ɔ*. Generally speaking, it is easier to find near equivalents to Zulu vowels in Afrikaans than in English. Thus Zulu *e*, *ɛ*, *o*, *ɔ* and *a* may be more aptly compared with the vowels in Afrikaans *meet* (measure), *sê* (say), *boot* (boat), *bord* (plate), and *maan* (moon).

Zulu *a* is more forward than the *a* of English *father*.

Regarding the consonants, we cannot accept Fox's statement (p. 10) that *g* (the voiced velar explosive), is pronounced as in "singer", nor that the tongue position for the alveolar lateral click *x* is the same as for the palatal click *q* (p. 21). Besides those mentioned on pp. 10, 19 and 21, Fox says that "Remaining consonants [are] as for English." What of *hh*, *dl*, *kl*, etc., we would ask? In neither case do we find any real attempt at explaining how beginners may acquire the foreign sounds of Zulu. In so many cases "bridges" can be built from the accustomed sounds, e.g. of English, to the Zulu, which assist the student enormously in acquiring correct pronunciation. In learning to pronounce the bilabial implosive *b* also, beginners find it most useful to know that much the same muscular action is involved as in smoking a cigarette or pipe, or in sucking liquid through a straw.

In the treatment of the grammatical portion we find two entirely different approaches. Fox deals with one noun class at a time, together with the other parts of speech which may be brought into concordial agreement therewith, e.g. verbs and qualificatives. Thus within a comparatively short time the student covers the major parts of speech and their concords but only insofar as they show relationship to class 1 of nouns. Then the process begins again for class 2, and so on. We ourselves do not favour this method, but different teachers with widely differing techniques often achieve the same results in the end, and there may be some advantage in this approach. Our real criticism of this book is that it abounds in inaccuracies, indeed glaring errors, phonetical, grammatical and idiomatic. Fox does not acknowledge the sources of his information. Generally he follows the principles of grammatical analysis and terminology set out in Doke's *Text-book of Zulu Grammar*, but an intelligent reading of this would have eliminated most of these errors. Only a few of the more outstanding points are mentioned here.

In Zulu, the present and immediate past tenses, indicative positive, have two forms each,

the Definite and the Indefinite, the choice of which in a particular context is determined by certain easily defined rules. In his preface (p. 5), Fox refers to the two forms of the present tense, and gives the simple preliminary rule governing this choice, but then states his deliberate intention to use only the Indefinite form, irrespective of the rule. Thus on almost every page of the book we find examples such as *umfana ucla* (the boy eats), *sibona* (we see), etc., in which Zulu demands the use of the formative *-ya-* before the verb stem. Right from the beginning of the book therefore, Fox uses a form which is grammatically and idiomatically incorrect. On p. 76 he attempts to set out the rules of choice more fully, and it becomes obvious at this stage that he himself does not understand the whole situation. Moreover, even after this statement, inadequate and inaccurate as it may be, he continues to write *ngithanda* (I love), *ugeza* (he washes), etc. Nothing can be more confusing to a student than this consistent and unreasoned failure on the part of the tutor to observe his own rules.

In dealing with the immediate past tense, however, Fox goes to the opposite extreme, and employs only the Definite form, with suffix *-ile*. There is no mention whatsoever that an Indefinite form (with suffix *-é*) exists at all; nor is there any mention of the subsidiary rules for the formation of the perfect stem, e.g. verbs ending in *-ala* > *-ele*, *-atha* > *-ethe*, *-ama* > *-eme*, etc. The future continuous tenses, *ngiyauk be ngibona* (I shall be seeing), etc., consist of two words, not one, as written by Fox (p. 95), and it should also be noted that these original full forms are never used in speech, *-yaukufe* invariably being contracted to *-yokufe* or *-yobe*.

Referring to the discussion of classes 5 and 6 of nouns, and adjectives in agreement therewith (pp. 61 ff.), we find the statement that the "Noun prefix *im-* determines the adjectival concord *em-*, and *in-* determines *en-*", followed by clumsy explanations as to why one has *incwadi embi* (a bad book) and *imbuzi enkulu* (a big goat) instead of *enbi* and *emkulu*, etc. Here again it is quite obvious that Fox just does not understand the principle of homorganicity which governs

the choice of nasal consonant in these prefixes and concords. The class 4 plural adjectival concord is given on pp. 54, 73, as *exi-*, whereas typical Zulu uses *exiN-*, where *N* represents the homorganic nasal and its influence. Fox consistently uses the conjunctive formative *na-* (with = together with) where the instrumental *nga-* (with = by means of) would be correct, and the locative *ku-* instead of *na-*, e.g. in *sikhuluma nabo* (we are speaking to them). The instrumental formative *nga-* is incidentally not mentioned at all in the book, nor are *njenga-* (like), *nganga-* (as big as), the reflexive prefix *zi-*, etc. We need not detail all the cases where the plain indicative is used instead of the participial; the participial instead of the infinitive; the infinitive instead of the subjunctive, etc. Fox fits Zulu words together according to English grammar and usage, producing completely "literal" translations which ignore the finer distinctions and clearer logic of Zulu. There are dozens of spelling mistakes: *ibubesi* for *ibubesi* (lion), *ihashi* for *ihhashi* (horse), *ukhohlwile* for *ukhohlwile* (he has forgotten), etc. The repeated occurrence of these proves that they are not merely printer's errors. On p. 53 we are told that the concord *li-* as in *liyana* (it is raining) refers, not to *izulu* (heavens, sky), but to *ilanga* (the sun)!! It is not without significance that all the numerous exercises are from English to Zulu. The number of implied mistakes in these is legion. Thus to exercise 16, no. 9: "Why are they not working? (They-are-not-working-why?)", the intended translation is no doubt the hypothetical but completely incorrect and unidiomatic *abasebenzelimi*?

We cannot recommend this book to anyone who is seriously interested in learning Zulu. From it he can acquire only an ungrammatical and unidiomatic knowledge of the language. It is quite the worst book of its type which has been published for many years in South Africa.

*

After this it is a pleasure to refer to Malcolm's book, although there are criticisms of this also. Extremely little fault can be found with Malcolm's

Zulu as such. The forms *yiwumbe* and *yiwumbeni* on p. 103 are incorrect, for the penultimate *yi-*, used when forming simple imperatives from monosyllabic verb stems, is dropped when the imperative incorporates an objectual concord. The correct forms are therefore *wumbe!* (dig thou it!) and *wumbeni!* (dig ye it!), where *wu-* refers, for example, to *umgodí* (a hole).

Malcolm's "sins" are of omission rather than of commission, as evidenced by the following: On pp. 8-9 the singular prefixes of noun classes 3 and 6 are given as *ili-* and *ulu-*, but there is no reference to the fact that these are normally contracted to *i-* and *u-*, although all examples in the word-lists and exercises are recorded with these short prefixes only. On p. 18 the adjectival concord, classes 1 and 2 singular, is given as *om-*, but students will be puzzled to find *omu-* in the adjacent examples. Adjectival stems and concords are set out on pp. 18-19, but there is no reference to changes under nasal influence. Absolute pronouns are given on p. 35, without any real explanation of their meaning or function. A number of misprints occur, especially the use of *b* for *β*. Malcolm often uses the old spellings *lwo-*, *kwo-*, as in *pesheya kwomfula* (sic) on p. 55, whereas the standard and more correct spellings are *lo-*, *ko-*. Fox incidentally uses the same obsolete spellings. Finally, we must comment on the selection of sentences for the exercises, for such unusual ideas as "The moonlight invited her boy" and "The sun called its cloud" (p. 31), might well have been omitted.

Having an excellent command of Zulu himself, Malcolm has failed to get down to the beginner's level and to appreciate the problems and difficulties of the latter in learning a language which is so extremely different from his mother-tongue. But with the assistance of a trained teacher who can fill in the gaps, the beginner will find this a most useful reference book. Perhaps Malcolm intends it to be used only in this way, for in his preface he says that it is "intended to cover the work which can be done in a University year by a student starting without any previous knowledge". If so, it is unfortunate that he has overlooked the increasing popular demand for an

introductory manual of Zulu for use also by those who do not have the services of a teacher.

D. T. COLE.

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South African Native Law. By G. M. B. WHITFIELD. (Juta, Cape Town: 1948.) Second edition, 662 pp. 63/-

Mr. Whitfield's well-known book, the first edition of which was published in 1929, has long been the first resort of busy legal practitioner hastily searching for "the law on the point" that immediately concerns him. The author has sought diligently to bring his work abreast of the stream of cases now reported every year. Indeed, he has packed so much material into his pages that the ordinary student is in danger of missing the wood for the trees. This difficulty might have been reduced by sub-headings in bold type or other means familiar to text-book writers. Although published in the Union, this volume was actually printed and bound in England and is easy to handle despite its bulk.

J. L.

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Colonial Government. Edited by MARGERY PERHAM. (Oxford University Press, London: 1950.) 80 pp., 4/6.

Colonial Law. By C. K. MEEK. (Oxford University Press, London: 1948.) 58 pp., 4/6.

The publication of this bibliography on colonial government completes the series of five that have come from Nuffield College. Besides the two noticed here, there have been bibliographies on colonial economics, on urban conditions in Africa, and on rural conditions and betterment in the British colonies.

The British are not nearly as deeply addicted to the art or vice of making bibliographies as the Americans are. Nor are their libraries as adequate as those to be found in the United States. As a result their bibliographies suffer by comparison. Both the booklets under review are physically

well produced and easy to use. My sense of their incompleteness is due to a fault that might be found with any bibliography of this kind. I think a British bibliography should either be explicitly limited to materials published in Britain or, if it goes beyond that and includes American and other literature, special pains must be taken to ensure its adequacy. In *Colonial Government* the last two pages are devoted to "Race Relations", a large field which American scholarship has cultivated very fruitfully, especially in recent years. Is it wise to list a few items chosen presumably at random? One of these is Myrdal's study of Negro life, *The American Dilemma*. No mention is made, however, of his critics, one of whom, O. C. Cox, produced the important *Race, Class, and Case* (New York: 1948). Another omission is some proper reference to the growing literature on Trusteeship. The meagre entries under Tanganyika and Togoland are not enough and, taken alone, could be misleading. At least a reference is needed to the Library of Congress Bibliography on Non-self-governing Areas compiled by Helen F. Conover (Washington: 1947) which puts special emphasis on mandates and trusteeships.

Dr. Meek had a simpler task in handling colonial law. Here again the section on primitive and ancient law does less than justice to American contributions. The next edition should, for instance, list the three volumes on *The Sources of Ancient and Primitive Law* edited by Albert Kocourek and J. H. Wigmore (Boston: 1915 and 1918); also Professor E. A. Hoebel's work, notably *The Cheyenne Way* (University of Oklahoma Press: 1941); and the excellent *Handbook of Federal Indian Law* by Felix S. Cohen (Washington: 1945).

J. L.

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Umbundu Kinship and Character. GLADWIN MURRAY CHILDS. (O.U.P., W.U.P. 1949.) xviii + 245 pp., 16 plates and 3 maps.

The Ovimbundu are a Bantu people living in the Banguela Highland in Central Angola. They were known in the past as slave and ivory traders,

operating between the Congo and the Atlantic Coast and were described by an early traveller as the greatest people in South Africa: to-day they are still a dominating people by virtue of their numbers (one and a third million), their adaptability, their ready acceptance of western culture, and the use of their language as a *lingua franca*. The author is both anthropologist and missionary; to the knowledge he has acquired in these two capacities through many years sojourn among them, he has added a rich harvest reaped from a vast amount of study. The book is "a description of the social structure and individual development of the people," with "observations concerning the bearing on the enterprise of Christian missions of certain phases of the life and culture described".

Mr. Child's aim is most laudable and we owe him a good deal for having drawn attention once again to the need for those concerned with changing African ways of life to build on African foundations rather than to discard, ignore or destroy what they find. He is primarily concerned with education and with building "a creative Christian educational system among the Ovimbundu"; but the basic problem is equally applicable to practically every other field. Disintegration of Bantu society is perhaps the main feature of Eastern, Central and Southern Africa to-day. A growing number of the agents of change recognize this; a few are actively seeking the means of making the change something positive instead of destructive but practically no one has been able to give the answer.

The book is divided into four parts, Habitat, Social Structure, Individual development and education, Historical. The first part is brief (11 pages) and to the point. The second, comparatively to its importance, is even briefer but less to the point. This and the next part are the twin poles round which the whole purpose of the study revolves and yet the former is covered in 46 pages, and the latter in 38 pages, with 11 and 27 pages respectively of discursive discussion: 68 pages are given up to a history, which is as irrelevant as it is dull. A tenth of the whole book is occupied by bibliographies.

The whole field of social structure is briefly reviewed: the tribe, the king (who has not existed for many a day) the village, household, kinship, sorcery and the hierarchy of age. All the ingredients are here for a vivid thumbnail sketch, (accepting Mr. Childs' self-imposed limits of space) but the result is just a jumble. Considering the importance Mr. Childs rightly attaches to the "building of a new social structure upon a solid foundation of the structure already in existence" and to "a sympathetic understanding" of the latter, this is the more disappointing. Take his account of the structure of the village, for instance. A typical village is said (p. 25) to consist of "4 apparently self-contained smaller 'units or wards'". Yet this division is not fully analysed, and later these divisions are themselves spoken of as villages (e.g. pp. 28-31). Further subdivisions are households. The analysis of their constitution is equally incomplete and though one might expect to lessen this deficiency by making deductions from the text, this is so inaccurate that one cannot ever be sure of a single fact, such as their number in the typical village. (An account of three of the four wards in this village (p. 27) gives 35 households between them, whereas a table (p. 29) refers to 44 households in the whole village and another table on the next page to 48 households). An equally serious omission is his failure to describe the "school village", which is one of the four wards of the typical village, or to compare it with units which are less directly the products of alien influences.

The chapters on Umbundu education are the best part of the book and are excellent. After brief description of childbirth practices and babyhood, a comprehensive account is given of early childhood, from weaning to 9 years, and the "sociological education" that goes on during these years; later childhood (from 9 to puberty), with

technical training and education in the assumption of greater responsibilities; adolescence and preparation for marriage and full adulthood; and finally, the first year of marriage and the further training for the bride by her mother-in-law. This account is mainly based on a composite manuscript compiled for classroom use from the contributions of a number of Ovimbundu, given in direct translation. This is an original presentation of material and in spite of the lack of editing needed to adapt the material to its present use, it is full, brisk and vivid. This should stimulate other fieldworkers to make good the usually deficient descriptions of native educational processes. But whether this will deter educationalists from continuing to disregard "indigenous methods" is another matter.

The latter part of this section is an attempt to analyse and evaluate the content of the indigenous education described "with reference to its bearing on present needs" and to "make suggestions for tentative procedures which shall build upon indigenous patterns of behaviour make adjustment to approved attitudes from the outside as easy as possible, and work towards a continuous and self-functioning process of self-adjustment". I find this the most disappointing section of the whole work, for instead of an original demonstration in applied anthropology it is little more than a learned lecture in educational theory and comparative colonial practice—excellent in its way and admirably suited to an educational manual, but sadly out of place in a work of this nature.

Mr. Childs gives some tantalising glimpses of the original material he has had at his disposal. Now that he has purged himself of his bookish gleanings, is it too much to ask him to produce the pure gold of his observations and experience. A book filled from his own rich store would be invaluable.

HUGH ASHTON.